INDIA'S INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS

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*Attempts at Conceptual Reconstructions*

Edited by
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INDIAN COUNCIL OF PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH

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*Dedicated to*

THE MEMBERS

OF THE INTERDISCIPLINARY GROUP

THIS FIRST

RESULT OF THEIR JOINT ENTERPRISE

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## Part IV

# INTRODUCTION

About four years ago, Prof. S. C. Dube, the well-known social anthropologist, visited Jaipur and delivered three lectures which were later to be presented at the World Congress of Sociology at Mexico. I happened to be present at the occasion and when asked to comment upon the presentation, said something to the effect that we would discuss the matter when the baby was born.

There has been so much talk of 'indigenization', and so little real attempt at doing it, that one wonders if those who talk are really serious about it. It reminds one very much of those who talk and write incessantly about 'revolution' and 'praxis' without engaging in any action to change things where they happen to be located. Yet, reflecting the next day on what I had said, I felt why should we not start the game ourselves. And so, what may be called 'The Jaipur Experiment' was born. Sometimes in early eighties, a meeting of persons from various disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities was called and, initially, the group met every week to keep the flame alive and the enthusiasm going. The group called itself 'The Interdisciplinary Group' and later met at more infrequent intervals, fortnightly or monthly. Since my retirement from the University, the meetings have become even more infrequent, though these are still held to remind ourselves of the promises that we had made and the task we had undertaken. Many of the early members of the group have lost interest; some even turned 'hostile' to the very spirit of the enterprise. One such person recently remarked to me that it was a 'racist enterprise'. But a 'hard core' remains and, hopefully, might attract new enthusiasts in the future.

In fact, it was to attract such new enthusiasts that we persuaded the Indian Council of Philosophical Research to fund a seminar on the subject. The idea that there is a hard-core intellectual tradition in India, and that it is differentiated according to different fields of knowledge is so alien to the prevailing intellectual ethos of the country, that we did not even know who amongst the scholars in the social sciences and the humanities

would be interested in the enterprise. To find out and locate such persons, I wrote to a number of friends and every person whose name was suggested was invited to the preliminary meeting. As most of the names suggested were of persons who were clustered around Delhi and Pune, we decided to hold the preliminary meetings there. Prof. T. N. Madan kindly took the responsibility of organizing the first meeting at the Institute of Economic Growth and Prof. M. P. Rege at the Institute of Education, Pune. The Delhi meeting was held on 5 February 1983 and was attended by Prof. S. C. Dube, Dr Leela Dube, Prof. Ashish Nandy, Prof. A. N. Pandeya, Dr Veena Das, Dr Devahuti, Dr Bhuvan Chandel, Prof. Ravinder Kumar, Prof. Rajni Kothari, Prof. T. N. Madan, Prof. P. C. Joshi, Prof. Satish Chandra, Dr Mukund Lath and some others.

The Pune meeting was attended by Prof. K. J. Shah, Prof. Ashok Kelkar, Prof. R. N. Dandekar, Prof. M. P. Rege, Prof. R. B. Patankar, Dr S. S. Deshpande, Dr S. E. Bhelke, Dr Mukund Lath, Prof. K. Krishnamoorthy, Prof. Indra Deva, Prof. V. Y. Kantak, Shri P. K. Nijhawan, Shri A. M. Ghose, Pandit Laxman Shastri Joshi, Prof. Raghavendra Rao and some others.

The idea of these preliminary meetings with persons from various disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities was to acquaint them with the enterprise and invite them to participate in it, if they thought it worthwhile. The initial response of most of the participants was of deep scepticism about the whole endeavour. Prof. Ravinder Kumar said at the Delhi meeting held on 5 February 1983: 'I always find the term "Indian tradition" problematic. Also, the term "Intellectual tradition" does not make sense to the historian.' He also said that he 'would like to know why one should stop at just identification of Indian concepts; why not try to understand the categories of thought in a more universal condition? Should we not try to see this undertaking in a wider sense? Are there existential specificities which can be related to wider generalities? Ideas should be universal, though born of specific contexts. We already have universal ideas—from wherever we might have them. Developing our own conceptual framework will only create an unnecessary island within a universal world of concepts and ideas.' And

Dr Dube had remarked: 'This debate is old. It is not a question of the recovery of the tradition. What is important is to ask, for whom are we doing this exercise.' Dr Veena Das had objected that 'Daya's methodology is problematic in that he seems to be looking at concepts as if they are frozen. But we have to allow for a development of these conceptual structures. In Daya's conception the implication is that there was no structure of argument in ancient texts.' And Dr Bhuvan Chandel had warned that 'as long as we speak in English, how can we think of the process of indigenization?'[1] Even earlier, some persons had warned of the 'obscurantist and revivalist' possibilities inherent in the enterprise.

The participants at both the meetings were asked if they would be willing to join the enterprise and write a paper for the final seminar which was to be held at Jaipur. Those who agreed to do so were formally invited to the Jaipur Seminar. The following persons attended the meeting from places outside Jaipur: Prof. S.C. Dube, Prof. Indra Deva, Prof. M.P. Rege, Prof. V.Y. Kantak, Prof. R.B. Patankar, Prof. K. Raghavendra Rao, Prof. K.J. Shah, Prof. K. Krishnamoorthy, Prof. Lloyd Rudolph, Dr Rekha Jhanji, Shri S.E. Bhelke and Dr P.K. Nijhawan. Besides, research students and faculty members participated in the discussions which were held from 2nd to 4th October, 1983. Sixteen papers were presented, out of which ten papers were selected for publication as they seemed to address themselves relatively more focally to the central concern of the seminar, that is, the conceptual articulation of India's Intellectual Traditions in different fields of knowledge. The other papers were interesting, and at least two of them—those of Dr Virendra Shekhawat and Prof. Raghavendra Rao have already been published elsewhere. All the papers, except that of Shri A.M. Ghose, have been revised by the authors for publication. Some editorial corrections have been made, mainly linguistic in nature.

II

The need for the enterprise of which this volume is a halting instance has been felt by many in recent times in this country. In

[1]The notes were taken by Dr Francine E. Krishna and supplemented by Dr Mukund Lath.

fact, as early as 1929, K.C. Bhattacharyya, perhaps the most original philosopher India has produced in this century, gave a talk entitled *Svaraja in Ideas* which has recently been the subject of intensive discussion in a special issue of the *Indian Philosophical Quarterly* (Oct.-Dec., 1984), specially edited by two well-known philosophers of contemporary India, K.J. Shah and Ramachandra Gandhi. Earlier, J.P.S. Uberoi had written *Science and Swaraja* which had made a plea in the same direction. Veena Das in the *Introduction* to her well-known work entitled *Structure and Cognition* has argued for the articulation of both the manifest and the implicit conceptual structures embedded in the texts and the use of them for the understanding of Indian social reality. But as her interest was limited, she confined herself to two texts only, and even within them only to those concepts which seemed to serve her limited purpose. Brahmanhood, householdership, kingship and asceticism are not usually the type of concepts which a cognitive enterprise deals with. And in case it does accept them for conceptual purposes, it would perhaps have to understand them at a more abstract level in functional terms. Yet, whatever may be one's dissatisfaction with the particular concepts chosen for articulation and the interrelationships worked within them, there can be little doubt that the move is in the right direction.

Sudhir Kakar's *Shamans, Mystics and Doctors* takes the enterprise of confronting conceptual structures of the west, i.e., of psychoanalysis in this case, with those of the healing traditions of India further. And though Kakar tends to identify the 'universalistic psychological approach' with that of 'psychoanalytic knowledge' in his 'Introduction' to the book, he shows far more sensitivity and appreciation of the ambiguities and ambivalences involved in the confrontation of alternative conceptual structures in one's own psyche in the main body of the book. One of these conceptual structures emanates from one's formal training in the cognitive tradition of an alien culture and the other, from that into which one has been born and bred and grown up since childhood onwards. As for the claim of 'psychoanalytic knowledge' to be 'universal', everyone knows that not only are there different schools of psychoanalysis but that psychoanalysis itself is not accorded the status of science by most psychologists. Yet, there can be little doubt that this is the most sustained attempt to take seriously the conceptual structures involved in the diverse practices of mental

healing in this country by a person trained in the western tradition in this very area and articulate a continuing dialogue between the two and record it for others concretely in a book. It is a methodological achievement of the highest order and is a path-breaking exercise which should be followed by sensitive practitioners in other fields of knowledge.[2]

These are not the only works which give evidence of a search analogous to ours. The search 'for a sociology of India' and the debate around it is well known. The latest, perhaps, is the article by T.N. Madan in the book *Way of Life*: *King*, *Householder*, *Renouncer*, edited by him and which serves as an epilogue to it. The work of Ashish Nandy, Claude Alvarez and Dharm Pal tries to do the same thing, though in a different direction. A similar search, with more fruitful results, can be found in the arts, particularly theatre and other allied art forms. But the attempt that we are trying to make and which is only faintly reflected in this work is in many ways significantly different from all these in that it seeks a conceptual articulation of the intellectual tradition in different fields of knowledge in order to use it creatively for extending, deepening and enhancing knowledge in these domains. Thus, its primary purpose is not to *understand* the texts in which these conceptual structures are embedded, but rather to free these structures from their moorings so that they may become *available* for diverse cognitive purposes. It is true that concepts find their meaning in interrelationship with other concepts and in the context of their applicability to the fields they refer to. But both the applicability and the interrelationships go on changing over time in response to the cognitive needs of the thinkers and the times. There is, therefore, nothing sacrosanct about the concepts or their interrelationships or the way they were understood or applied at a particular time in a particular text by a particular thinker. The task, thus, is neither exegetical nor historical, though these are important in their own right and, in a sense, presupposed by the exercise we are engaged in. Rather, it is to discover the intellectual idiom of the past or, to vary the metaphor, to take possession of the intellectual patri-

[2]An interesting critique of the work of Veena Das, Sudhir Kakar and others is presented by Leela Dube in her paper, *The Challenge of Indigenization* presented at the Tenth World Congress of Sociology, Mexico.

mony which is ours by right and use it to advance the cognitive enterprise of mankind today.

There is, of course, the feeling so well articulated by Ravinder Kumar that all the parochial conceptual structures of the past stand superseded by the conceptual structures of the present in all fields of knowledge as these alone are universal in character and have already shown their power and fecundity by supplanting all the intellectual structures of the past. The self-proclaimed universal character of these so-called modern conceptual structures in the field of knowledge, however, is a myth believed in only by those who have been trained and intellectually socialized in them. To any impartial observer of the contemporary intellectual scene in the west, particularly in the social sciences and the humanities, it would be difficult to believe that there is any *one* conceptual structure in any discipline which is accepted by all its practitioners. Leaving aside the great divide between the Marxist and the non-Marxist approaches in almost all fields of knowledge, there is the radical difference between the continental and the Anglo-American approaches in most fields also. Even within the continent, the French and the German work shows substantive differences with respect to the same field of knowledge. There are, of course, always some practitioners of a discipline in all these countries who show a marked affinity to the dominant trend prevailing elsewhere, but they are generally out of the mainstream of intellectual current dominant in their own country.

These facts are so well known that one need not belabour the point. Even the ideal of a unified science lies shattered today, and one does not even know how to distinguish between genuine science and pseudo-science. The Popperian enterprise has come to a grinding halt and the history and philosophy of science on the one hand and the sociology of knowledge on the other, have made it almost impossible even to make sense of the claim of knowledge to be unitary and universal. Even the natural sciences have not remained immune from the critique launched by Kuhn and his successors and we have reached a stage where the criterion for selection between hypotheses is not the truth they might have but the research programmes they engender and the amount of funding they may obtain. And scientists being human always prefer those research programmes which require more funding.

As for 'truth' which used to be the goal of knowledge, there is now only the consensus of a community of scientists who share a certain paradigm, agree on a certain methodology and abide by some conventions. If there are dissidents, they may form another club of their own and propagate what they consider to be 'truth'. And, according to present philosophy of science, there is and perhaps can be no rational scientific way to decide between them. The choice will always be on grounds that are extra-rational. As Mary Hesse writes: 'It has been sufficiently demonstrated that the language of theoretical science is irreducibly metaphorical and unformalizable, and that the logic of science is circular interpretation, re-interpretation, and self-correction of data in terms of theory, theory in terms of data'.[3] Or, as Richard Rorty hopes: 'Modern science will look like something which a certain group of human beings invented in the same sense in which these same people can be said to have invented Protestantism, parliamentary government, and Romantic poetry'.[4]

I do not wish to make capital out of such statements for the simple reason that they are basically suicidal in nature. If everything is as arbitrary as it is made out to be, then the opposite of what is being said is as correct or true or valid as what is being said by these persons. If all systems are closed and self-justifying or if there are no trans-subjective or trans-social or trans-cultural grounds for any cognitive claim, then anyone else's claim is as good as Rorty's or anybody else's. But the universality of a claim does not mean that the claim need be necessarily accepted; rather it only implies that the claim has been entered into the cognitive arena for consideration by others.

Conceptual structures in the Indian intellectual tradition, elaborated, refined and developed over millennia, also claim universal applicability just as those elaborated in the west in the last few centuries or others deriving from classical Greece with Christian admixtures do. The relative strengths and weaknesses of these

[3]Mary Hesse, *Revolutions and Reconstructions in the Philosophy of Science* (Bloomington, 1980), p. 173. Quoted by Richard Rorty in his article 'Habermas and Lyotard on Post-Modernity', *Praxis International*, Vol. IV, No. 1 (April 1984), pp. 32-43.

[4]Richard Rorty, p. 36. The western intellectuals always tend to think everything was invented by them. Rorty is no exception.

conceptual structures can, however, only be ascertained when they are contrasted, compared and confronted with each other. But this can only be possible if alternative conceptual structures elaborated and developed in those non-western cultures which have had a long history of intellectual pursuit in which hundreds and thousands of persons have taken part over millennia are articulated, critically evaluated and creatively developed by the intellectuals of those countries.

Concepts, however, are not just tools for the understanding of what exists, as is usually thought by many people. Rather, they are modes of organizing what we experience in a particular manner and give it a certain meaning and significance, thereby making it intelligible in a distinctively human sense. Beyond this, they also constitute reality in a certain sense, particularly at the level where the reality they ostensibly seek to articulate or understand is itself the creation of human beings. And, even beyond the *constitutive* function of concepts in certain domains, there is the other function of determining our attitudes towards what we perceive and guide our actions with respect to it. But if this is so, then the acceptance of conceptual structures that have originated in the west tends to implant an unconscious acceptance of the western way of *looking* at things resulting in the adoption of the western way of *judging* those things also. Another consequence of this is the unconscious acceptance of the western perception of the direction in which that reality ought to be changed. Nothing else seems feasible, as one has to work with whatever is available rather than find fault with it and not do anything at all.

But, if what is regarded as desirable is itself determined by the conceptual structures through which we apprehend reality and give meaning and significance to it, then it is even more imperative that we develop our own conceptual structures so that we may have our own way of life. It may, of course, be said that a 'way of life' is not determined by the 'conceptual structures' that men use, but by 'compulsions of technological innovations' on the one hand and 'relations of production' on the other. But this itself is a way of looking at social reality and hence open to the same considerations as any other.

III

The articles selected for publication in this volume relate to the *Arthaśāstra*, the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the *Manusmṛti* and other various *Smṛtis*. The interdisciplinary group had concentrated on the first three texts only, as they seemed to be concerned with what is dealt with these days in disciplines such as political science, poetics and sociology. It was felt that as these are some of the key areas in the social sciences and the humanities, even a minimal success in the articulation of conceptual structures in these domains would prove the viability and feasibility of the project. Much of the material that is available in the notes taken by some members of the interdisciplinary group, particularly those relating to the notions of *śāstra*, *tantra* and *yukti* as well as the ones concerning the discussion about polity in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Śrīmadbhāgavata*, the *Arthaśāstra* and the extensive and exhaustive documentation in the five volumes of *Rājanītikāṇḍa* of the *Dharmakośa*, the little known but monumental reference work brought out by Pt. Laxman Shastri Joshi from Wai, has hardly found any place in these pages. One reason for this is that this is not directly a report on the findings of the group. The other, and more important, reason is that the group itself feels its findings to be so tentative, halting and groping that it does not consider the time ripe enough to crystallize its findings.

The challenge of the Seminar and the decision for publication have, however, forced its members to put into writing, however tentatively, what they had been doing in the sessions of the interdisciplinary group all these years. The papers of those who have been active members of the group, N.K. Singhi, K. L. Sharma, A.M. Ghose, Mukund Lath and R.S. Bhatnagar, show the difference in palpable ways. The methodological queries Singhi raises have been discussed many times amongst the members of the group. The main theme of his paper is both methodological and substantive. The discussion on the *Arthaśāstra* and the comparative assessment of its treatment of bureaucracy with the one given by Weber shows the fruitfulness of the approach, though there can be little doubt that it needs to be pursued in greater depth than has been done in the article. The articulation of *Mīmāṁsā* principles of interpretation by K.L. Sharma is helpful in understanding the traditional exegesis of texts in India. The principles,

though developed by Jaimini in the context of Vedic texts, are of wider relevance and were in fact extended to cover, with suitable modifications, the interpretation of other texts. Kishori Lal Sarkar had already extended them to the interpretation of law in his famous lectures delivered in the early years of this century and also compared them with the principles of interpretation as developed by English jurists in the interpretation of law. But the *Mīmāṁsā* principles had in fact achieved almost as universal an acceptance in India in the context of textual interpretation as *Nyāya* in the field of logic or *Vyākaraṇa* in the field of studies relating to language.

These two, however, are mostly background papers to the main enterprise of the book, though Singhi's remarks on the *Artha-śāstra* directly pertain to it. With A. M. Ghose's article on the *Manusmṛti*, we are in the thick of the enterprise. This *is* the sort of enterprise we have been engaged in. Ghose lists all the concepts he can lay his hands on in the *Manusmṛti* and divides them into two classes: the *Givens* and the *Key-concepts*. The 'Givens', according to him, comprise the following concepts: (1) *sṛṣṭi*, (2) *varṇa*, (3) *āśrama*, (4) *dharma*, (5) the supremacy of the Vedas (*svataḥprāmāṇya* of the Vedas), (6) the doctrine of rebirth (*punarjanma*), (7) the goal-seeking nature of man, (8) the notion of hierarchy, (9) the notion of kingship or monarchy, (10) the five cardinal virtues, (11) the concept of mobility (*gati*) and (12) *karma*. The 'Key-concepts', on the other hand, are (1) *ācāra*, (2) *śauca* and *śuddhi*, (3) *daṇḍa*, (4) *vinaya*, (5) *dāna*, (6) *pāpa*, (7) *prāyaścitta*, (8) *anutāpa* and *santāpa*. It is not quite clear how the author has picked up the concepts, particularly those that are given in English. Also the distinction between the "Givens" and the "Key-concepts" does not seem to have been clearly formulated by the author. At one place, he writes: 'by the "Givens" I refer to Manu's assumptions. They form, as it were, th starting point. The "Key-concepts", as I have found them in the *Smṛti*, are mostly borrowed from the tradition, largely Vedic' (p. 6). However, later (p. 32) he seems to suggest that 'if something is a matter of human will and effort, it is a "Key-concepts". Discrepancies aside, the classificatory distinction could perhaps be construed in a different way. The 'Given concepts' could be treated as those which a discipline borrows from other disciplines

which it presupposes in some sense or from the larger culture which all disciplines equally share. The contrast, then, would be between concepts which were specific to a particular discipline and those which are accepted by it from other disciplines or from culture in general. Amongst the concepts which are found to be specific to a discipline, one could perhaps make a further distinction between those which are key concepts and those which play an auxiliary or subsidiary role in the system. In any case, Shri A.M. Ghose has drawn our attention to an important distinction which may contribute fruitfully to the task of the conceptual articulation of not merely the *Manusmṛti*, but any text whatsoever. Ghose, however, only lists the concepts, explores their meanings through the contexts in which they occur and points to the various types of ambiguities in them. He does not explore their interrelationships or discuss the various ways in which they form clusters or sub-clusters of their own.

The paper by Indra Deva and Shriramā takes the articulation in the direction of juridical concepts as found in the *Smṛti* texts. It would be interesting to explore the relation of juridical to non-juridical concepts in the *Smṛti* literature of India. However, this must await a later exercise. Another thing that could be explored is the way the *Smṛti* texts concretize their abstract concepts in the judicial context. However, the focus of Indra Deva and Shriramā is not so much on the specific concepts relating to the judicial context as on what the various *Smṛtis* have said about them and the differences amongst them. There is little interest in the interrelationship between the concepts they have mentioned in the course of their paper. The rest of the papers deal with the *Nāṭya-śāstra* and in most of them the focus is directly on the concepts and, to a certain extent, on their interrelationships also. As they have been the subject of detailed comment elsewhere, there will be little point in discussing them here.

On pure *a priori* grounds, one would have expected to find greater enthusiasm regarding the enterprise amongst social scientists who have talked so incessantly about indigenization in this connection. But it is the students of literature who seem to have responded more enthusiastically. Perhaps, the publication of this volume might generate that larger awareness of the need for such work by practitioners of different disciplines. Our own

experience is that it is not an easy task to perform. A working knowledge of Sanskrit is minimally essential for undertaking the project. One should be able to judge whether a translation is adequate or not. Beyond this, one should be able to judge what is cognitively significant and contemporarily relevant to the knowledge-enterprise as it exists in the concerned discipline to-day. This involves not only a thorough and deep acquaintance with the western conceptual structures in and behind the different formulations in various disciplines, but also a sensitivity to the cognitive possibilities underlying the classical texts. Besides this, there has to be the ability to ask new questions and to seek their answers from the text. In fact, the whole attitude to the texts has to undergo a radical transformation if the enterprise has to make even a little headway. For this, there has to be a subtle blend of criticism, empathy and cognitive imagination which simultaneously rejects, appreciates and creatively extends what is found in the text.

We have developed a tentative methodology for what we have come to call 'creative encounters with the texts'. But, it is too premature to spell it out in full, though vague hints of it are available in certain articles in the book. But, as everyone knows, methodologies are interesting only to the extent that they deliver results which are significant from the cognitive point of view. For this, a methodology has to be seen in application and judged in terms of the result obtained. We hope to present such results with respect to some specific texts in the near future. Till then, let the articles in this volume be a sample of the direction that the work has taken uptill now.

## PRELIMINARY MEETING ON INDIA'S INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS: SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS[5]

DAYA KRISHNA: In India we have a unique problem in that we happen to be in this country. We have an Indian tradition, a tradition which many countries do not have. The difficulty is what to do with it. As we examine it closely we feel that the basic texts do not move beyond classification. Nevertheless, there are strands in the Indian tradition which are purely intellectual. Should it not be our task to conceptually articulate the tradition in intellectual terms? This task need not necessarily be done in the way the west has ordered and seen our tradition. We should try to derive the concepts from within by seeing what is implicit and what is embedded in the texts. We can try to do this by asking new questions, or by attempting to free the texts and the tradition so that they can be seen in a secular or objective way.

A situation has often arisen in the field of social sciences when western models and concepts do not seem to apply to the Indian experience. It is quite possible that if our Indian social scientists had a clearer understanding of the conceptual nature of the tradition, they might have had a sounder basis on which to build alternative models or a conceptual framework to explain the Indian reality. It does not, of course, mean that there is simply one framework by which we must work. But if we can introduce some other frameworks it might be helpful.

T.N. MADAN: These days young people have very little understanding of the tradition. Recently I asked them what Gandhi meant to them and they frankly admitted that he hardly meant anything to them. Is the issue of the recovery of the Indian tradition really relevant? Or, is it an issue of trying to

[5]Preliminary meeting held in Delhi at the Institute of Economic Growth on February 5, 1983. Summary of the discussions was reconstructed from the notes taken by Dr Francine Krishna and Dr Mukund Lath.

understand it in itself? What are we trying to do? We have to deal with a revived understanding of the Indian consciousness—the concern with secularism. The recovery should mean the recovery of a number of traditions and the possibility of a dialogue between them and the other traditions. The problem of the recovery of the Indian tradition raises problems of (*i*) competence, and (*ii*) ethics. Are we competent or rightly situated to do it? The recovery involves not just getting back what we have lost. Rather, it should mean the establishment of a dialogue between our identity and that of others.

DAYA KRISHNA: Part of the problem has arisen as a result of the way we have been teaching our students. See the way we have been teaching Indian philosophy. It is not presented in a way in which we can be critical of it. As far as the question of credentials is concerned, we all feel that those who are in the field are not fit to do the job. Sanskritists know the texts, but they cannot conceptualize them. We can do it, as we know what questions to ask. But we must have a criterion of what is cognitively relevant. We should be modest, but we should also not underestimate our capacities. Also, the tradition must be so stated as to become a part of living thought and discussion.

VEENA DAS: It is not that there has been no attempt to solve this problem, as there has long been a debate between the traditionalists and the modernists. The tradition presents only a representation of the texts. Also, while the modernists have wanted to have a critical dialogue with the traditionalists, we should also try to encourage those working in the tradition to have an active dialogue with the modernists. However, it can also be dangerous to make a complete split between the traditionalists and the modernists. I agree that we do have the credentials to undertake this task. In fact, it is often a question of putting the questions to the Sanskritists in terms in which they understand them. We must define our questions in terms in which they are translatable. It is important first to structure properly a dialogue between Sanskritists and modern theorists, because Sanskritists do understand and can creatively respond if properly questioned.

DAYA KRISHNA: In regard to the question of having a dialogue with the traditionalists we, in the Department of Philosophy, University of Rajasthan, have had several experiments of this kind. Firstly, in the Department we have had an exchange of teachers between our Department and the Sanskrit College in Jaipur City. One of their traditional pundits has come to the Department and has held a long series of seminars with our colleagues and we have studied some texts with him. On the other hand, some of our teachers have offered to go to the Sanskrit College in the town to do courses in western philosophy with their students. However, that part of the exchange has not been so successful as they do not seem to be interested in what we have to offer.

The other experiment we undertook also as a project with funds from the University Grants Commission was to try to establish a dialogue with some of the pundits in Varanasi, Calcutta and Pune. Several scholars, mainly those who were familiar with western philosophy and who also could read and speak Sanskrit fluently, were requested to take part in this. They were to spend time with the pundits and raise some of the problems that had been troubling modern western philosophers and to try to get the pundits to respond to those issues in the light of the Indian tradition. Prof. G. C. Pande, Prof. Sibajiban Bhattacharyya and Prof. N. S. Dravid held a series of sessions with the pundits of Varanasi. Then in Calcutta, Prof. Bhattacharyya, Prof. Dravid and myself met the Bengali pundits. There we had a very lively meeting and the pundits responded creatively to what we were trying to do; in fact they reversed the process and asked us to try to deal with traditional problems in the light of modern philosophy. One began to have a sense that the tradition was active and alive and one also became aware of the immense complexity of the different schools, a sense that the usual text-books on the different systems of Indian philosophy just do not reveal.

But to return to the problem of what we are trying to do here. Let me make it clear. We are not trying to understand the classical tradition as the pundits apprehend it. We are trying to see if there is an implicit conceptual structure in the Indian tradition

which can be brought to the surface and stated in modern terms. Groups such as ours are trying to reformulate ancient ideas. Other groups can approach the issue differently and enter into a dialogue with the traditionalists.

TUSHARKANTI SARKAR : Are we asking the impossible?

A.N. PANDEYA: I feel that the attempt is relevant. First, let us reflect on the overall situation in our academia. The adverse reaction in the academic community is, of course, a problem. Most of us are ourselves outsiders to the tradition and we have to see our own limitations. Secondly, we increasingly feel that what we have been doing in our own work is problematic and questionable. We have to broaden our framework to have a dialogue with an active tradition.

If you try to make yourself understood to anyone outside the academic circle, in *their* language, you make a fool of yourself. There is a living tradition and the issue is one of recovering not a dead but a living tradition.

DAYA KRISHNA: What we are doing is contemplating a study of the intellectual conceptualization of the tradition. We are not concerned with having a dialogue nor in making an empirical study. That is already being done. It may be an important task to study actual behaviour and arrive at a hidden structure. But our own task, at least for the present, is to articulate and debate what the written tradition itself has to say. We are also making an empirical study of certain key concepts to see how they are understood by different people. But, let me emphasize, what is missing today is a cognitive enterprise concerning ancient texts.

ASHISH NANDY: Let me give the example of Michael Madhusudan Dutt; he was a Hindu who converted to Christianity. He was deeply influenced by the west. He was anti-Hindu; he wrote a Bengali epic, *Meghnād Badh Kāvya*, in which Rāvaṇa was a hero. There have been other examples of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, that of Acharya Tulsi or a Tamil version. There are many versions of a counter-culture available in the Indian tradition. What are we to

do with these? Here in India we talk of alternative traditions. But the alternatives actually exist. However, the crucial question is, has our present generation not gone west ? We have also to see the indigenous construction of the west by us.

T.N. MADAN: Where does the reconstruction actually begin? In education?

RAVINDER KUMAR: I always find the term 'Indian' tradition problematic. Secondly, the term 'intellectual tradition' does not make sense to the historian. But I would mainly like to know why one should stop at just identifying the Indian concepts; why not try to understand the categories of thought in a more universal condition? Should we not try to see this undertaking in a wider sense? Are there existential specificities which can be related to wider generalities? Ideas should be universal, though born of specific contexts. We already have universal ideas—from wherever we might have them. Developing our own conceptual framework will create only an unnecessary island within a universal world of concepts and ideas.

DAYA KRISHNA: If I may make a clarification, one can conceptualize and generalize about the human condition, but our task here is limited. There is also the question of a differential tradition which we have to see.

TUSHARKANTI SARKAR: It is necessary to create an environment where native concepts can develop and acquire new dimensions of meanings of their own. Such a development will give us a mooring. We should allow philosophy to grow from our contact with people.

VEENA DAS: Daya's methodology is problematic in that he seems to be looking at concepts as if they are frozen; we should allow for a development of these structures. We should not say that these categories are true ultimately of the human condition. It is not a problem of self-identity merely. In Daya's conception the implication also is that there was no structure of argument in ancient texts.

S. C. DUBE: This debate is old. It is not a question of the recovery of the tradition. What is important is to ask for whom we are doing this exercise. Certainly it is a question of traditions. It is a question of identity. The issue of theoretical concepts is alright, but it also has to address itself to the theoretical level. How to ask the questions is very important?

DEVAHUTI: The task of conceptualizing the Indian tradition should be left to philosophers.

A. N. PANDEYA: In the tradition there were always certain ground rules as to who is doing and why. But we have to continually look back at the tradition to see what is active and what makes it continue to live.

LEELA DUBE: We should go into detail to articulate some of the concepts which are there and have not yet been articulated. We have used western concepts and feel we need to develop more indigenous concepts.

RAVINDER KUMAR: The question of east-west is not relevant, to my mind. We should try to devise new theories which will be applicable to any tradition.

BHUVAN CHANDEL: In my opinion as long as we speak in English, we cannot think of the process of indianization. How can we translate terms which have their roots in the Indian language?

A. N. PANDEYA: Let me make a few concrete suggestions. First, the texts and disciplines that could be fruitfully explored:

1. The *Arthaśāstra*
2. The *Kāvyaśāstra*
3. The *Dharmaśāstra*
4. The *Āyurveda*

Secondly, there are certain concepts of common currency crucial

in the self-awareness of the people that should be explored, concepts such as *prajñā*, *puruṣa*, *prayoga* and the like.

We must have a three-level enterprise for the purpose:

1. We must delimit the implied domain of self-awareness within which a concept is articulated and remains meaningful. This must be done in alternate ways.
2. Concepts must be so articulated as to relate them to parallel concepts in the west.
3. To identify thus the identity shared by the many cultural traditions of India.

# PART I

N.K. SINGHI

# SOME ISSUES IN THE CONCEPTUAL ARTICULATION OF THE INDIAN INTELLECTUAL TRADITION: With Special Reference to the *Arthaśāstra*

From the perspective of the social sciences, the study of ancient Indian texts raises several issues. The categorization of knowledge into well-defined, formalized disciplines having institutionalized mechanisms for creation, communication and diffusion in the present form is basically a western model.

Social sciences with distinct conceptual categories and theoretical formulations, unlike certain other categories of knowledge, did not exist in the classical intellectual traditions of India. Although there is an elaborate discussion of philosophical, theological, literary, aesthetic, medicinal and other sciences, the social sciences did not assume an organized, systematic and distinct orientation, despite the fact that there are texts dealing with polity, economy, medicine, aesthetics, the normative ordering of society and other societal dimensions. This assumption, however, can be debated. If, however, the answer is in the affirmative, a further question in the realm of the sociology of knowledge becomes relevant. If it didn't exist, how can it be accounted for?

The second question relates to the perspectives in which the Indian classical scriptures should be analysed. The Indian social reality has been viewed by social scientists within the framework of conceptual categories and theoretical orientations as developed and given by western scholars. The dominance of such a perspective created an intellectual colonialism and led to the trained incapacity of the contemporary Indian intellectuals to construct cognitive alternatives and to examine their own intellectual traditions as revealed in classical texts. Thus the dominance of western paradigms in the understanding of the specificity of the Indian social reality at a certain level of abstraction has led to the inability of Indian social scientists to develop ethno-social scien-

ces. It has further led to a distortion in the analysis of social reality which was the result of dissonance between the western paradigms and the reality of Indian society. To illustrate the point, it is usually stated that even the development of theoretical approaches is in a certain sense structurally determined. The formulation of the structural-functional approach, which dominated conventional sociology for a long time, was the consequence of the ahistoricity of American society. This approach negates the historical perspective. Sociologists in India have been using the structual-functional approach as a dominant mode of inquiry for a long time. As a consequence, Indian social reality has been constructed in a way which is not adequate and integral as the historicity of the society has been neglected. A society which has a fathomless historical past and whose present is based on cumulative historical traditions cannot be adequately understood and analysed through an approach which negates history.

One other consequence of the dominance of western paradigms has been the neglect of the study of Indian classical texts. Such a neglect has had academic consequences at institutional level. Both in the realm of research and course-contents, the social sciences hardly have anything about the classical texts which have dealt with society and polity in the classical intellectual tradition of India.

The discussion about indigenization and ethno-sociology is a recent one. It emerged as a result of discontent arising out of a cognitive failure to grasp Indian reality. The entire issue is still at the level of conceptual discussion and there is very little effort to operationalize the idea.

To illustrate the point regarding the use of western models in understanding Indian reality, the Action Frame of Reference for societal analysis may be taken. Parsons' theory is both general and grand and hence is universalistic in character. The situation towards which action is oriented consists of physical, social and cultural objects. Physical objects are empirical entities which do not interact with or 'respond' to ego. Cultural objects are symbolic elements of the cultural tradition, ideas or beliefs, expressive symbols or value-patterns so far as they are treated as situational objects by ego and are not internalized as constitutive elements of the structure of his personality. Action has been defined as a

process in the actor-situation system which has motivational significance to the individual actor, or in the case of a collectivity, its component individuals. The attainment of gratification and avoidance of deprivation are the concerns of the actor. The situational complex of Parsons does not make any mention of the transcendental realm as an object of possible orientation. But transcendental orientation has been an important attribute of Indian social reality. It is interesting to find a certain parallelism in the attributes of Action, viz. action, consequence and constraint in certain classical Indian texts and the Parsonian attributes of Action Frame of Reference, viz., action, goal, constraints, means and situations. The rich tradition of categorization and classification as revealed in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Pāṇini's grammer, *Carakasaṁhitā* and several texts in Jain and Buddhist literature have not been discussed or analysed by contemporary social scientists. Even accidental readings reveal that categories which are used in contemporary social sciences exist in classical Indian texts and are more comprehensive, precise and logically adequate than those constructed by contemporary western thinkers. Parsons' writings reflect elaborate conceptual schemata in the context of system and action designed and claimed to be universalistic which, if examined in the context of empirical realities of several cultures, manifest comprehensive limitations.

In fact, the inadequacy of several western conceptual schemata and theoretical formulations in the context of understanding Indian social reality necessitates a more careful and deeper analysis. However, the discontent arising out of it may provide the possibility of a major breakthrough in the growth of knowledge in the social sciences in India.

With these observations in the background, we may turn to the basic question of social science paradigms for the analysis of Indian social reality. An attempt to identify issues of inquiry in relation to classical texts is being made here. Essentially there are two realms of understanding in this field:

1. Substantive-theoretical,
2. Methodological.

In the substantive field, one of the major issues relates to the sociology of knowledge. Through this approach an attempt can

be made to construct the social reality of a particular epoch through an examination of the description and analysis as contained implicitly or explicitly in the classical texts. The relationship between knowledge and society has to be viewed as independent, i.e., it is not merely that social forces determine knowledge, but knowledge also determines social structure.

Conceptual articulation of the Indian classical texts is an area which has assumed importance due to its neglect despite the rigour and profundity with which it has been presented in them. A lot of myth has been built around the claims of originality of western intellectual traditions in social sciences. This has been further buttressed by the ignorance and apathy on the part of Indian scholars for the study of their own intellectual traditions, which is the result of academic socialization that itself is a legacy of its colonial past.

Therefore the questions which can be posed in this context are:

I. What types of socio-cultural, economic and political milieu prevailed in the society as revealed in the text? *Socio-cultural context.*

II. Study of the text as a creative work within the context of socio-cultural milieu of that particular era: *Sociology of Knowledge context.*

III. How can that reality be constructed and what conceptual classificatory schemata should be used for such a contruction? *Methodological dimensions: Classificatory context.*

IV. The conceptual and theoretical dimensions regarding society and culture both within the matrix of transcendental and mundane aspects of life, as presented in the text. *Theoretical-conceptual context.*

This would imply identification of conceptual categories and theoretical formulations along with underlying assumptions and axioms which have been used in the text.

The specific dimensions of theory and concept and their interrelationships may be examined as follows:

1. The construction of conceptual categories which would help in understanding the reality of Indian society as it exists today. (This task would be different from that of discovering the conceptual categories present in the text, and even from those

which are constructed on the basis of the text or those which would help in understanding the text.)

2. The discovery of conceptual similarities between classical texts belonging to different fields of knowledge.

3. To examine if a broad category exists which could possibly provide a general theory of culture, personality and society. Thus to examine the possibility of construction of a general theory of society, culture, personality and nature on the basis of conceptual categories used in different texts.

4. An examination of the universalistic conceptual categories as formulated by western scholars in the light of the conceptual categories revealed in the Indian texts.

5. Categorization of concepts on different bases and to examine them in terms of precision, consistency, level of abstraction and definiteness. This would lead to classification of concepts in certain neat categories, viz.:

1. Classificatory
2. Comparative
3. Quantitative
4. Enumerative
5. Summative
6. Statistical.

There are, however, three major limitations to the exercises as proposed above.

(*a*) The very idea of the conceptual articulation of Indian texts is due to western influence. This influence is the result of the academic socialization of western models as part of our cognitive structures.

To free oneself from this, one will have to make a conscious mental effort to academically desocialize oneself. A process which, though difficult, is necessary for any innovation and creativity.

(*b*) How to construct the psycho-social reality of the past with our present mentality? We always tend to read our own mentality into those of our forefathers.

(*c*) The third difficulty is institutional. The diffusion of any innovative and creative process necessitates adequate institutional mechanisms and instrumentalities or their readjustment so that

new ways of looking become a part of the teaching-and-learning process.

II

This is a general and broad poser and paradigm which provides a framework for inquiry. In this section, an attempt will be made to examine the *Arthaśāstra* in the perspective of Weber's contribution to bureaucracy. The *Arthaśāstra* not only provides an understanding of sociology at a particular period of history but also delineates characteristics which are rational and appropriate in the management of a state. Thus from the perspective of the sociology of knowledge, an ab-extra extrinsic analysis of the relationship between knowledge and society is possible and from the ab-intra intrinsic epistemological perspective, a construction of the characteristics of the bureaucracy is feasible.

## The Arthaśāstra

The *Arthaśāstra* is a text which primarily deals with state administration. The societal forces which led to its creation were diverse and hence do not admit of any indisputable answer. It has been suggested that the *Arthaśāstra* was written to strengthen the weakening states. It was a reaction to Buddhistic teachings which negated life and was oriented to strengthen the Vedic teachings. Further, it was written to create a powerful centralized administration which was necessitated in the wake of foreign invasions. It was written to delineate a detailed account of the administration and formulation of such an administrative system which would strengthen the functioning of the state more effectively. It was based on both the earlier texts in this regard and practical personal experience.

Although the *Arthaśāstra* does deal with the details of administration, it also shows an awareness of the social structure in which the system of polity existed.

There is an emphasis on a pragmatic orientation to the management of state affairs. The administration of the state dealt with in the work relates to

(*a*) Allocation of duties to various levels of officials,
(*b*) Clear-cut hierarchical division,
(*c*) The process of decision-making,

(*d*) The nature of recruitment of officials,
(*e*) Professional training,
(*f*) The documentation of decisions,
(*g*) Continuous tests to determine the work and quality of administrators.

The activities of the state were not restricted to the maintenance of the conditions necessary for the existence of the society. Apart from regulatory and protective duties, developmental activities were also to be undertaken by the state.

The regulatory functions give a detailed account of procedures to collect village tax, to undertake elaborate land surveys, to award punishment for corrupt practices, regulate weights and measures and adopt a proper policy of taxation.

The protective functions deal with the maintenance of order and protection from foreign invasion. There is a detailed account of spying, an elaborate discussion on war strategies, a description of arms, types of bows and arrows, types of chariots, regional and seasonal considerations in the march of army, types of warfare and the treatment of prisoners of war.

Diplomacy has been dealt with as an institution. Negotiation, persuasion, conciliation and threat of war were the main attributes of diplomacy.

The State gave assistance for trade. Loans were given for the purchase of seeds, cattle, etc. There were well-formulated programmes to deal with famine. Emigration was encouraged; irrigational facilities were provided for.

The policy of taxation has been dealt with in detail and can be considered as an authoritative text on public finance. Certain categories of people were exempted from taxes, such as women, minors, disabled persons and students. Taxes were levied in accordance with irrigation facilities; war loans were floated.

Taxes from different professional groups like actors, dancers, musicians, soothsayers, *gaṇikās* (prostitutes) were collected.

Medical relief was organized. Schemes for pension for aged and orphans existed. There is also mention of the age of marriage which was considered as 12 for girls and 16 for boys. Divorce was permitted in special circumstances and so was remarriage for women. There is some discussion about *Tīrtha* who must

have been reformers and responsible for improving the social order. There is a distinct classification of the spheres of state activities. It was to be organized on adequate and systematic knowledge. The other-worldly orientation is merely incidental and not substantive. Thus the emphasis of the *Arthaśāstra* has been on the rational formulation of administrative structures and functions with the delineation of neat classificatory categories, emphasis on certain personality traits and training, with adequate techniques of tests, and spying for effective regulation of the State. The *Arthaśāstra* has given comprehensive and elaborate details of the nature of economy, polity, diplomacy, corruption, social welfare measures both at individual and collective levels and also reveals the nature of social stratification, status of women, organized wars and normative framework of inter-personal relationships operative at that period of history.

III

We briefly delineate ideal type characteristics of administration in the *Arthaśāstra* and compare them with those of Weber. The ideal typical characteristics formulated by Weber are ideal not in the Platonic sense but they are constructed from historical documents at cross-cultural levels and rationally designed so as to lead to maximization of efficiency.

The Weberian characteristics of bureaucracy are as under:

1. There is a specific sphere of competence based on systematic division of labour. Necessary authority is given to the incumbent to carry out the functions.
2. The organization of office follows the principle of hierarchy.
3. The official functions are bound by rules which are formal and written.
4. There is complete separation of property belonging to the organization and personal property of the official.
5. The officials observe impersonal and formal official duties.
6. The officials are recruited through universalistic procedures.
7. The officials are subject to systematic discipline and control in the office.
8. The office is treated as the primary occupation of the incumbent.
9. The officials get salary according to rank.

Through delineation of these ideal-typical characteristics Weber attempts to present a universal model of bureaucracy.

The construction of the characteristics of bureaucracy through the *Arthaśāstra* provides a more comprehensive and universalistic format. Weber, the most influencial of the founders of structuralism, was concerned with the distribution of power amongst the organizational positions in the bureaucratic structure and his structural emphasis neglects the behavioural aspect of the bureaucratic functioning. The *Arthaśāstra*, on the contrary, gives details of behavioural dimensions. Weber was so concerned with the functional unity of rational-legal bureaucratic system that he failed to pay attention to those internal characteristics that inhibit the rational goal achievement. Weber has neglected both the dysfunctions of bureaucracy as well as the role of informal relations in bureaucratic functioning.

Another point of difference relates to the level of adequacy of the Weberian model. Weber's concern has been essentially with the microscopic level where internal processes of control, communication and decision-making are involved. The *Arthaśāstra* gives details of bureaucratic functioning at different levels and the linkages between them.

The *Arthaśāstra* also discusses in details the dysfunctions of bureaucracy and suggests internal mechanisms of its control. The *Arthaśāstra* distinguishes between protective, regulatory, developmental and fiscal types of bureaucratic organization. The mode of recruitment emphasizes both the technical competence as well as personality traits which are appropriate to a particular task. There are internal in-built mechanisms of checks and controls for possible deviance in the bureaucratic functioning.

The particularistic qualities like familial background were considered significant in the process of recruitment. The types of test are not merely formal-technical but also lay emphasis on character and personality. There were allurement tests—love allurement test, monetary allurement test and religious allurement test.

The *Arthaśāstra* presents details which seem relevant even in contemporary India. The above comparative framework between Weber and Kauṭilya has been attempted to examine the theoretical constructions of the two works. This could be further

pursued in terms of formulation of distinct concepts as they emerge from the *Arthaśāstra*.

As a microscopic-specific illustration the understanding and analysis of the *Arthaśāstra* is a poser for elaborate and in-depth works on different Indian classical texts. Efforts in this direction can help in building ethno-social science as well as in construction of historical-social reality—an attempt to go back to the past so that contemporary empirical social reality can be comprehended meaningfully. This would help in the synthesis of the textual with the contextual in the understanding of Indian social realities.

K. L. SHARMA

# HERMENEUTICS IN THE *MĪMĀṀSĀ SŪTRAS* OF JAIMINI: Principles of Interpretation and Authority of *Smṛti* Texts*

The four principal questions which have been discussed in the *Mīmāṁsā Sūtras* of Jaimini (200 B.C.) are: (*i*) Dharma, (*ii*) Action and its relation to Dharma, (*iii*) the subject matter of the Vedas with special reference to Dharma and Action and, (*iv*) the method of Interpretation (hermeneutics) of the Vedas and other classical texts.

This paper aims to present, firstly, the Mīmāṁsā hermeneutics or the principles of interpretation and, secondly, it shows how to understand the authority of *Smṛti* and other classical texts in the light of these principles of interpretation.

## I

Hermeneutics[1] of the *Mīmāṁsā Sūtras* helps in bridging the gap between the familiar world in which we live and the alien or strange world that we strive to understand. Thus, *Mīmāṁsā* hermeneutics is concerned with all those situations in which we encounter meanings that are not immediately understandable but require interpretative effort.

The subject of interpretation or hermeneutics, according to *Mīmāṁsā*, involves two questions: (*i*) what is the meaning and intention of a particular word or sentence or passage? and (*ii*) whether it constitutes an obligatory rule of any kind or a quasi-obligatory rule of a non-obligatory matter?

The principles and the rules of hermeneutics or interpretation given by Jaimini may be considered as an answer to these ques-

*This paper owes a great deal to Kisori Lal Sarkar's work entitled *The Mīmāṁsā Rules of Interpretation*, Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Company, 1909. At many places, the author has used the formulation of axioms and principles as given by him.

tions. These principles and rules may be divided into the following five classes:

(1) axioms of interpretation (these include *Sārthakatā*, *Lāghava*, *Arthaikatā*, *Guṇapradhāna*, *Sāmañjasya* and *Vikalpa*);
(2) general principles as regards the interpretation of words and texts (*Śruti*, *Liṅga*, *Vākya*, *Prakaraṇa*, *Sthāna* and *Samākhyā*);[2]
(3) general principles of the application of texts;
(4) the specific rules called *Nyāya*; and
(5) rules which specially bear on the character and interpretation of the *Smṛti* texts and usage.

Before discussing the *Mīmāṁsā* rules of interpretation of the *Smṛti* texts and usage, it may be helpful to discuss the general principles of interpretation and their application in brief.

The elementary principles of the *Mīmāṁsā* which are connected with properties of words, sentences and passages, may be regarded as self-evident principles in the same way as the axioms of Euclid. These elementary principles or axioms of interpretation are:

(1) Every word and sentence must have some meaning and purpose. (The *Sārthakya* axiom).
(2) When one rule or proposition would suffice, more must not be assumed. (The *Lāghava* axiom).
(3) To a word or sentence occurring at one and the same place a double meaning should not be attached. (The *Arthaikatā* axiom).
(4) If a word or sentence which, on the face of it, purports to express a subordinate idea clashes with the principal idea, the former must be adjusted to the latter or altogether disregarded. (The *Guṇapradhāna* axiom).
(5) Contradiction between words and sentences is not to be presumed if it is possible to reconcile them. (The *Sāmañjasya* axiom).
(6) When there is a real contradiction, any of the contradictory matters may be adopted at option. (The *Vikalpa* axiom).[3]

The above six axioms are elementary propositions regarding interpretation and they may be taken as self-evident principles. The general principles are those principles which are arrived at after an examination of those materials with which an interpreter has generally to deal, viz., meaning of words, structure of sentences, the relation of topics, etc. These principles are *Śruti* principle, *Liṅga* principle, *Vākya* principle, *Prakaraṇa* principle, *Sthāna* principle and *Samākhyā* principle.[4]

When a verb and the case governed by it has a self-evident meaning and thus form a complete and independent sentence, this is called *Śruti*. No attempt should be made to strain or twist its meaning. When meaning of a word or expression is not clear on the face of it and its latent form of suggestive power or indicative power has to be brought out by the suggestive power of some other word or expression, that is called *Liṅga* principle of construction. Where what is apparently a complete sentence has, in order to make out a satisfactory sense, to be read as a part sentence connecting it with some other clause, this is called a matter of *Vākya* or syntactical arrangement. When a sentence or clause by itself does not indicate its purpose but becomes clear when read with some other text belonging to any other topic discussed elsewhere then it is called a case of *Prakaraṇa*. *Sthāna* (position) means commonness of place. *Sthāna* has the same meaning as *Krama*. The question of *Krama* (order) is of great importance as regards the Vedic ceremonies. *Samākhyā* means a connection established between different passages by the indication afforded by a derivative word or a compound name.

What is the connection of these principles of interpretation (*Viniyoga pramāṇas*) with generally accepted *Pramāṇas*, viz., *Pratyakṣa*, *Anumāna*, *Upamāna*, *Arthāpatti*, *Śabda*, *Śiṣṭācāra* (approved usage) and *Abhāva*. *Śabda Pramāṇa* is the basis of the *Śruti* principle and *Anumāna*, *Upamāna* and *Arthāpatti* together are the basis of *Liṅga*, *Vākya* and *Prakaraṇa* principles. *Śiṣṭācāra* is the foundation of those principles of construction which have reference to usage and which are discussed by Jaimini in his chapter on the *Smṛtis*.

Interpretation and application of a text are not quite the same. The general principles of application include such ques-

tions as whether a text is obligatory, or partially obligatory or non-obligatory. Two classes of obligatory texts are *Vidhi* (injunction) and *Niṣedha* (prohibition); the two classes of statements *Arthavāda* (explanatory statement) and *Nāmadheya* (nomenclature) are non-obligatory. *Mantra* is between the two. It also includes those rules which determine the persons to whom particular texts apply or not, the order in which the texts apply, and the order in which the texts mentioned in one connection are to be applied to other cases and the necessary variations and omissions in making such applications.

The general principles of application of a text may, in brief, be expressed under the following heads:

(1) The principles of distinguishing between obligatory, quasi-obligatory and non-obligatory texts. (*Mīmāṁsāsūtra*, I.2.19-25).

(2) The principles of *Adhikāra vidhis* (the rules indicating rights, as opposed to rules imposing duties) show to whom the *Vidhi* texts are applicable. (*Mīmāṁsāsūtra*, VI.1.6-16).

(3) The principle of *Krama vidhis* regulates the order in which things are to be done. (*Mīmāṁsāsūtra*, V.1.1-8).

(4) The principles of *Atideśa* (rules of reference, general and special) are concerned with the rules by which rules regarding one matter are made to bear on another matter. (*Mīmāṁsāsūtra* V.1.1-8).

(5) The principle of *Ūha* (the principle of adaptation. *Mīmāṁsāsūtra*, IX.2.40). *Ūha* means reasoning. It comes into play in relation to *Arthavāda* and *Niyama Vidhis*, which chiefly relate to the material environment of a spiritual duty. It is not applicable to *Vidhis* proper enjoining the spiritual duties themselves.

(6) The principle of *Bādha* (the principle of bar) primarily means barring a thing owing to inconsistency (*MS*, Chapter X). It helps in the reconciliation of conflicting texts. *Tantratā* and *Prasaṅga* principles have also been mentioned by Jaimini. *Tantratā* involves the principle of avoiding repetition of acts when a single act would serve the purpose. *Avāpa* is the reverse of *Tantratā*. It is the repetition of a thing many times to make it intelligible to some people. *Prasaṅga* denotes something incidental. It imports the principle that the performance of the major duty dispenses with the performance of minor duties which are involved in it (*MS*, Chapter X). In other words,

*Prasaṅga* may be considered as an extended application of *Tantratā*. In it the performance of the subsidiaries is with the main purpose of one primary, but it benefits other primaries indirectly. It differs from the *Tantratā* in which the performance of subsidiaries is with the object of benefiting many primaries once for all, while in the former the performance of the subsidiaries is mainly for the benefit of one primary only, but it ensures the benefit of other primaries as well.

*Vidhi* texts, which are obligatory in nature, may be classified on the basis of their degree of obligatory force—*Vidhi* proper, *Niyama* and *Parisaṃkhyā*. A *vidhi* indicates an absolute necessity and is in the form of "you shall do it". The form of *Niyama*, which is not so urgent, may be understood as, "you shall do it unless there be a good reason to the contrary". A *Parisaṁkhyā* is hardly required as a rule of law. Its form is, "you may do it". The classification contemplates only positive injunctions and not prohibitions. A *Vidhi* is a perfect (imperative) command. A *Niyama* is an imperfect (directive) rule. A *Parisaṁkhyā* is a monitory precept.[5]

The Vedas deal with both the supernatural and transcendental as well as natural and ordinary matters. The *Vidhi* and *Niyama* are applied to both supernatural and ordinary matters. But their meaning varies in the two contexts. *Niyama* is only a directive rule. Sometimes *Vidhi* may be lowered to the position of a *Niyama* according to circumstances.[6]

*Mīmāṁsā* also distinguishes between *Kratudharma* and *Puruṣa dharma*,[7] or *Manuṣyadharma*. The *Puruṣadharma* consists of the social and moral rules which bind a man always during his ordinary course of life, but the *Kratudharma* are those rules which are binding while one undertakes to perform a sacrifice and the breach of which entails a sin removable by the performance of a penance. The distinction between *Kratudharma* and *Puruṣadharma* may be understood as a rule of positive law and a rule of conscience or quasi-law (which is something of a general character). The Mīmāṁsakas also distinguish between *Arthakarma* (work for the main purpose) and *Pratipattikarma* (works which are merely incidental).[8]

In the next section an attempt will be made to present the *Mīmāṁsā* principles of interpretation of *Smṛti* and usages.

II

The *Mīmāṁsā Sūtras* of Jaimini, as has been said earlier, are mainly concerned with the investigation of the nature of *Dharma*. Jaimini says that *Dharma* itself is an object and its binding character is by reason of Vedic injunction.[9] But if it is so, then what is the authority of *Smṛti* in matters relating to *Dharma*? There are cases, where though there is no support from any Vedic text, the *Smṛtis* lay down that 'an act should be performed in such and such a manner and for such a purpose.' As examples of such *Smṛti* injunctions we have (*a*) 'the *Aṣṭaka* should be performed', (*b*) 'the teacher is to be followed', (*c*) 'tanks should be dug', (*d*) 'drinking booths should be set up', (*e*) 'one should keep a tuft of hair on the head', and so on.

Jaimini in his *Sūtra* (chapter I, *pāda* 3) discusses the authority of *Smṛti*. The propriety of introducing the discussion on *Smṛti* and custom by Jaimini requires explanation. It has been said that 'we can form no idea of the authority of the Veda until we have understood it in all its bearings, and as it is only with the help of *Smṛti* and custom that it can be so understood, it is necessaay that the exact nature of these latter should be investigated'.[10] Jaimini's purpose here is to ascertain how far *Smṛti* and custom may be allowed to interfere with the Veda in matters relating to *Dharma*. He tries to show that these (*Smṛti* and custom) are based upon the Veda from which alone they derive their authority.

But, the following objections were raised against the authoritative character of the rules of *Smṛti*:

1. Duty arises only from the Vedic commands. Everything outside the Vedas must be disregarded.[11] These *Smṛtis* are the work of human authors and are dependent upon their memory which cannot be infallible. Further, their authority is not inborn or self-sufficient as that of the Veda.

In response to this objection, Jaimini says that the authoritativeness of the *Smṛti* law is a matter of inference because the promulgators of it were the same as those of the Vedas.[12] Kumārila also says that '*Smṛtis* are found to be accepted as authoritative by an unbroken line of Vedic scholars from time immemorial, hence they cannot be altogether wrong or untrustworthy.'[13]

2. The second objection is that 'since both the meanings are found to be signified by the word, the acceptance of one or the other is optional. We may accept whichever we choose.' In other words, why can't we regard the two rules (*Smṛti* and *Śruti*) as optional alternatives?

Jaimini is of the view that the sense in which the word is used by persons who take their stand upon the scriptures should be accepted as authoritative, because it is more reliable than any other. In other words, that signification of words which is based upon the scriptures is decidedly more authoritative because the knowledge of *Dharma* is obtained by means of the scriptures alone.[14] A signification accepted and sanctioned by the Vedas is irrevocably fixed and can never be set aside, while that sanctioned by ordinary usage is variable and liable to change.

Is the authority of customs local or universal? This question has been answered by the *Pūrvapakṣa* by admitting that the authority of *Smṛti* and custom is held to depend upon the assumption of corroborative Vedic texts; this very fact which establishes their authority also proves that their authority is limited and localised. Jaimini's answer to this question would be that injunctions apply to all persons and hence the absence in the assumed Vedic texts of such all-comprehensive words cannot be rightly urged as a reason for restricting the authority of the custom. Why so? Because all that the basic authority (i.e., the assumed Vedic text) says is that such and such an act should be done and there is no authority for restricting its application to any particular group of persons.

Jaimini gives seven principles for the constructive understanding of *Smṛti*.[15] These principles are as follows:

(1) *Smṛti* is presumed to be authoritative and binding (*Smṛti-prāmāṇyādhikaraṇa*).

(2) In the event of conflict between *Śruti* and *Smṛti* the latter fails. (*Śruti-prābalyādhikaraṇa*).

(3) A *Smṛti* text, the origin of which can be traced to perverse motives, is not binding, i.e., authority does not attach to *Smṛti* prompted by wordly motives. (*Duṣṭamūlaka-smṛti-aprāmāṇyādhikaraṇa*).

(4) A usage has the force of law if not originated in any perverse motive. (*Padārtha-prāblyādhikaraṇa*):

(5) Between two conflicting usages (either as regards the application of words or in matters of conduct) that which in conformable to the *Śāstra* is to prevail (words used in the *Śāstra* are authoritative).

(6) An authorised matter expressed in foreign words must be understood in the sense that these words carry with the foreigners (*Mleccha-prasiddha padārthādhikaraṇa*).

(7) A usage or *Smṛti* must be reduced to the short, simple and general form of a Vedic *Vidhi* (*Sāmānya-Śruti-Kalpanādhikaraṇa*).

Before discussing the above-mentioned principles, it would be helpful to present the basic frame of reference of interpretation of these principles.

In the case of the *Śruti* the matter was embodied in set forms of language, mostly in meters so that words could be recited and sung. There were elaborate rules known as *Śikṣā* which taught the mode of learning the Vedas by rote and the manner in which they should be recited. But in the case of the *Smṛtis* it appears that what was communicated was the substance of a matter—information and thought—in which language was not of much consequence. So the one was primarily a matter of speech and the other a matter of memory. One represented the revealed law which admitted of no change; the other the floating traditions of customs and practice which naturally influence the conduct of society. The former was naturally of superior authority to the latter and as a matter of course, when both covered the same ground, the revealed law prevailed over the unrevealed. But there is no doubt that both came down side by side. This is clear from the fact that many of the great Rishis with whose names the *Śrutis* are associated, are identical with the names of those with which the *Smṛtis* are associated, such as Manu, Atri, Aṅgiras, etc.

It may be interesting to see the relationship between the *Smṛti* and the *Śruti* in the light of legal terminology, with special reference to western legal terminology. In western legal literature we have the Statute Law and the Common Law. In Hindu law

literature what corresponds to these is the *Śruti* and the *Smṛti*. The Statute Law is in set language and is in itself authoritative. So is the *Śruti* law. The Common Law or the customary law may or may not be in writing; at any event it is not in the shape of set language. It is also not in itself absolutely authoritative, as its authoritative character depends on certain conditions. The *Smṛti* law which is associated with the Customary Law of the Hindus is almost of the same character. But as there are additional principles of constructing the Common Law and the Customary Law in European Law literature, so additional rules have been framed by Jaimini for constructing the *Smṛti* Law and *Prayoga*, i.e., Usage Law. Common Law is also regarded as identical with case law. As regards the interpretation of the Statute Law there are certain principles of literal construction, construction by context, special rules of construction, etc. In interpreting case law there are other rules to be observed. As regards customs and usages there are the conditions of antiquity, certainty and reasonableness. The special rules of interpretation laid down by Jaimini regarding the *Smṛti* or customary law more or less partake of the character of rules used in the interpretation of law.

III

Let us reflect on these two extreme positions:

(1) *Smṛti* usages are the outgrowth of ages of gradual development and they are independent of the *Śruti* texts.

(2) *Smṛti* usages are completely dependent on *Śruti* usages and there is no place in them for any deviation from the set rules of *Śruti*.

Mīmāṁsā principles of interpretation of *Smṛti* try to synthesize these two extreme views and emphasize that the truth lies between the two extremes.

The first principle (*Smṛti* is presumed to be authoritative and binding) emphasizes the Vedic origin of *Smṛti* and establishes the trustworthiness of *Smṛti*. The authority of *Smṛti* rules of conduct quoted above rests on the ground of the apparently useful purposes served by them. For transcendental purposes, we shall infer Vedic texts as their basis. If we view this principle in the legal framework then we find that in early stages of

society religion is mixed up with civil law and its disentanglement from religion took place gradually. Kishori Lal Sarkar has rightly pointed out that "the Vedic command—'thou shall aspire for a heavenly life'—however weak or theoretical it may have become, is sure to have some influence in the proper development of the Hindu law."[16]

In the case of conflict between a *Smṛti* text and a Vedic text, the latter should prevail. Vyāsa also says that 'where there is a conflict between the *Śruti*, the *Smṛti* and the *Purāṇas*, the *Śruti* must prevail, but in a conflict between the latter two, the *Smṛti* must prevail.' Validity of a *Smṛti* text is questioned in case of selfish motive. The sanction of the Vedic obligatory texts is the *Apūrva* sanction of securing heavenly purity. When a selfish motive is the cause of a rule, that rule cannot be consistent with this high ideal. Hence such a rule must fail. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa takes the expression *Hetudarśanāt* to mean from seeing a fundamental reason which is different from the fundamental reason of the Vedic *Vidhāna*, viz., the attainment of heavenly bliss.

The fourth principle which deals with the superiority of the meaning of the terms (*Padārtha*), says that even if you do not accept this system you will know the sense of the words used to guide you in your actions in this life.

Śabara interpretes *Padārtha* as action. The objector says, what is the authority for such an act as *Ācamana* (sipping water with suppressed breath)? If you say that they are not in contradiction with the practice sanctioned by the Veda, the reply is that it is of limited scope. To this the author replies that because it is not based on selfish motive, such practices should be recognised. The principle says that *Padārtha* is an established thing or established fact. Usage is also an established fact. A usage is not properly a usage unless it be a settled or established fact. Jaimini says there may be limits of the *Śāstras* to the contrary, but if a usage has beeome a settled fact it must hold good if no improper cause is found at the bottom of it (*MS*, I.3.7). In other words, it may be said that the validity of an established usage (*Prasiddhapadārtha*) requires no proof, because proof is necessary only for that which seeks recognition. That which has already been recognised needs no proof.

With regard to the condition that a usage should not be

contradicted by the *Śruti* or by a valid *Smṛti,* it may be said that a usage is contradicted by the *Śruti* only when it is contradicted by any obligatory text of it. It is not contradicted by the *Śruti* if only there are *Arthavādas* and the like opposed to it. There are many things in the *Śruti* which are in the nature of an *Arthavāda* or *Pratipatti-karma* (incidental acts), and as such, are not *Vidhis.* Usages which may have sprung up subsequently in suppression of such matters cannot be regarded as being in conflict with the *Śruti* and are, therefore, perfectly valid.

If it is accepted that the principle of every fact established by usage is valid on the supposition that it is in consonance with the Vedas, then all such facts will be in a coordinate position with equal weight, and in that case how will one discriminate between them if there be conflict amongst them? Jaimini gives in this connection the following rule. Between conflicting usages (either verbal or otherwise) that which confirms the *Śāstra* is to prevail. A usage wholly outside the limits of a *Śāstra* would be perfectly valid, according to the above mentioned 4th rule, if there be no other usage in rivalry to it. The consideration of a *Śāstra* comes in when there is more than one usage on the same matter and in the same locality. In the same locality and with regard to the same community, two conflicting usages should not be tolerated. One of them must be eliminated by the aid of the *Śāstra.* But on the same matter, there may be two different usages in two different locations or with regard to two different communities. According to Jaimini, in such cases there is no conflict, but merely differences of application.

The fifth rule gives rise to the following question : Is everything in connection with the usage to be embodied in the rule of law to be presumed? Again if it obtains with particular sections of the people or in particular parts of the country, should the rule to be presumed be in a particularised and limited shape? These questions may be answered with the help of the seventh rule (that is, a usage or *Smṛti* must be reduced to the short, simple and general form of a Vedic *Vidhi*). But the answer raises a question: if a general *Vidhi* applicable to every place or to every person is to be presumed even when the custom or usage is really local, then the effect would be to abolish local customs. Not only this, there would be the further effect of

bringing into existence general rules in the place of what were intended to be local customs only.

According to Jaimini, the above mentioned problem may be solved with the help of two concepts, i.e., the *Utpatti vidhis* and the *Viniyoga* or *Prayoga vidhis*. *Utpatti vidhis*, embodying a general principle, can never be local or tribal, but *Viniyoga vidhis* which provide the mode of the application of general *Vidhis*, are from their very nature local.[17]

*Mīmāṁsā* recognizes local customs in case of worldly matters but not in the case of religious matters. Jaimini wanted that the whole of the Aryan community should be guided by uniform rules and should not be divided in that regard. As regards matters not purely religious, by the usage maxim, local customs which are not condemned by wise persons are good, while those so condemned are invalid. Jaimini takes no note of the condemned practices, but recognizes approved usages only.

## Notes and References

1. For detailed discussion on the nature and purpose of hermeneutics see H. G. Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, (translated and edited by D.E. Linge, University of California Press, London, 1976).
2. Jaimini, *Mīmāṁsā Sūtras*, English translation by Mohanlal Sandal, Motilal Banarsidass, Varanasi, 1980.
3. *Mīmāṁsā Sūtras*, I. 2.22-24, 25; III. 3.9; VI. 3.39; II. 1.9; X. 8.7.
4. *Ibid.*, III. 3.14. Among the six means of determining the connection of subsidiaries—Direct assertion; Indicative power, Syntactical connection, Context, Place and Name—that which precedes is more authoritative than that which follows. See *Śabara Bhāṣya* for detailed interpretation of this *Sūtra*.
5. *Ibid.*, I. 2.42.
6. *Ibid.*, VI.3.16. Sometimes a command is with an object for restriction.
7. *Ibid.*, IV. 1. 1-2 and III. 4.20.
8. *Ibid.*, II. 10-12.
9. *Ibid.*, I. 1.2. The duty is an object disguised by a command.
10. Ganga Nath Jha, *Śabara Bhāṣya*, Vol. 1. Gaekwad Oriental Series No. 66, 1973, p. 87.
11. *MS*, I.3.1. That the source of *Dharma* is Veda, the result is that the non-Veda has no authority and is not aeceptable.
12. *Ibid.*, I.3.2.
13. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Tantra Vārtika*, cf. from Ganga Nath Jha's translation of *Śabara Bhāṣya*, Vol. 1 (1973), p. 88.
14. *MS*, I.3.9.

15. *Mīmāṁsā* process of establishing principles of interpretation is called an *adhikaraṇa*. The text under consideration, the doubt concerning it, is the first side: the other side, i.e., the answer and the conclusion, all these constitute an *adhikaraṇa* (a complete theme). It is identical with *Nyāya* (rule). For these seven *adhikaraṇas* see *MS*, I.3. 1-14.
16. Kishori Lal Sarkar, *Mīmāṁsā Rules of Interpretation, as applied to Hindu Law*, Thacker, Spink & Company, Calcutta, 1909, p. 233.
17. For detailed discussion see *MS*, I.3. 16-23.

# PART
# II

A.M. GHOSE

# MANU'S CONCEPTION OF MAN AND SOCIETY

## I

Understanding an ancient text and explicating the issues it seeks to resolve involve sustained interpretation. This task becomes onerous if the text in question enjoys immense prestige and unimpared respect inspired by religious and patriotic sentiments. However, an interpreter is not necessarily an advocate, nor an interpretation, a defence; an interpreter could be a commentator, a critic and a judge. A commentator may point out, if necessary, what he finds to be obscure and a commentary may thus be an appraisal.

To my mind there are two different approaches to the study of the *Manusmṛtī*. First, the *Smṛti* could be studied in isolation from other similar texts written in antiquity, such as the *Smṛtis* written by Āpastamba, Baudhāyana and others. We may not also take its commentators very seriously either. The traditional commentators have their own philosophical and religious predilections; some are close to Rāmānuja while others may be close to the Sāṁkhya School. These predilections not only influence their commentaries on isolated *ślokas*; they influence, perhaps indirectly, their entire approach. If the traditional commentators have occasionally been taken into account, it is barely to be acquainted with their views; these commentaries should neither be allowed to determine the focii of our study nor should they show the way we must interrogate or examine the received opinions. For one thing, the *Manusmṛti* is not written in an aphoristic manner; it is indeed an arduous task to meander through the maze of commentaries we happen to possess, To go straight to the text, therefore, should not be seen as a futile exercise. Secondly, one could possibly compare the *Manusmṛti* with the

relevant portions found in the two great epics in Sanskrit, or with the legal and political thoughts of ancient Greece and Rome or, finally, with the works found in ancient Jewish and Chinese traditions. Such comparative studies, ambitious though they may be, will be found rewarding. But this is a different story; moreover, the present author is not competent to undertake the task of such a magnitude.

The *Manusmṛti* is a work, almost encyclopaedic in scope. The work deserves to be studied as a whole although it is not easy to say what precisely lends cohesion to the work. I am afraid we may have to restructure it, as far as possible, for ourselves. The one ideal which dominates the entire work, broadly speaking, is the preservation of a social order with the Brahmin at the top followed by the *Kṣatriya*, the *Vaiśya* and the *Śūdra*. The order is recommended on natural as well as normative grounds. The respect and prestige of this order is natural in that the four *varṇas* were created by Brahmā and that an innovation introduced by men, in their perversity, would be calamitous; the hierarchy is normative in that its preservation would be found beneficial and wholesome to the individual, the community and the state. How far this hierarchical order outlined by Manu would receive a rational support, as we visualise it today, is a different matter.

The *Smṛti* is a huge compendium of descriptions and prescriptions, the latter being both more important and preponderant. The prescriptions do not have any preamble, as we understand the term. Manu is not a philosopher of law like Plato, for example, he is not even an 'author' in the strict sense of the term. He emerges as a formidable editor, although there are a few passages (IX, 182-183) where Manu's own views have been recorded. Quite often he appears as an anthologist or even as a lexicographer. He is not interested in delineating the theoretical foundations. He is more interested in arriving at conclusions received from antiquity than in enunciating the *premises*. It is an *unusual* work in that the last eight *ślokas* of Chapter I contain an outline of the whole work. But it is difficult to discern any essential relationship between the twelve chapters. Of the twelve chapters, two are devoted to a discussion of the duties of a prince and politics or statecraft. This makes *Manusmṛti* a unique work.

The *Smṛti* is encyclopaedic in the sense that it deals with

several topics belonging to other *Śāstras* or disciplines. It is, no doubt, primarily a work on *dharma*. But it devotes two chapters to the topics which are, strictly speaking, part of *Arthaśāstra*. Finally, it deals with topics, even if in a summary fashion, pertaining to *mokṣa*. How far Manu has succeeded in making *mokṣa* an integral part of *dharma* will be examined in the sequel.

II

In what follows I have sought to identify the 'Givens' in the hope that such an identification will be found methodologically useful. The 'Givens', I must add, have often been identified by the author; when however, they have not been identified by Manu, we could reconstruct them. Once the 'Givens' are identified one could proceed to examine the 'Key Concepts' scattered all over the work. The two lists, the one of the 'Givens' and the other of the 'Key Concepts' may overlap sometimes. The words and concepts included in the two lists, that of the 'Givens' and the 'Key Concepts', will be found on closer examination to be polysemic and one faces considerable difficulty in determining the proper senses of these words. An excursus into etymology is not necessarily helpful because quite often these words have acquired unusual overtones in course of their long and eventful history. Also, the etymological, the traditional and the scholarly meanings, as distinguished from the popular meanings of these words, do not often stand aligned. The best course left for us, therefore, is to accept the obscurity as a fact; if the text becomes a little less perspicacious on that account we ought to concede the point.

The 'Givens', as I have listed them here, could be questioned. I shall be happy if a more acceptable list were available. I have sought to identify them only as a methodological device. Once the 'Givens' and the 'Key Concepts' are identified we may proceed to the derivations. If the derivations cannot be related to the 'Givens' then they deserve to be discarded. In course of discussing the 'Givens' and the 'Key Concepts', I have pointed out the contradictions and incongruities as they appeared to me. I have occasionally consulted the commentaries and the explanations found in them, but I have not always found them satisfactory.

We also examine those concepts which are not there in the

text at all. Many of these concepts have been surreptitiously introduced by the commentators who belonged to a different age. These concepts, originally absent in the *Smṛtis,* are often found to be of significance in later Hindu thought. It should be remembered that the incorporation of these terms by the later commentators tends to distort the tenor of the work.

By the 'Givens' I refer to Manu's assumptions. They form, as it were, the starting point. The 'Key Concepts', as I have found them in the *Smṛti,* are mostly borrowed from the tradition, largely Vedic. The concepts are called 'Key Concepts' because they help us to enter into the structure erected by Manu; they also determine the tone and style of his thinking.

Finally, there are certain ideas and terms which are conspicuous by their absence in the text as well as in the commentaries. They too are important because they are widely found in the later Hindu tradition.

When we go to the *Smṛti* today, we seek, consciously or unconsciously, to comprehend it with the mentality shaped by modern education, notions and ideals. It is almost impossible to study these *Smṛtis* with the windows so completely closed that no breath of modern social, political and legal ideas is allowed to enter.

## III

## The 'Givens'

### (*i*) *The Doctrine of Sṛṣṭi* (*creation*)

I am not interested in comparing Manu's account of creation with the lore of creation figuring in many legends found in antiquity. To my mind Manu's views on 'creation' are relevant because the nature of 'things', used in the broadest sense, including emotions and passions since they too are 'created' (I. 18, 25), are determined by the creator. 'Creation' ordains the future course of objects created (I. 29). The social order itself is a creation by the Lord. Manu is not one of those who think that the social order came into existence as a result of human decision (I.21, 29). 'The Lord created a King for the protection of the *whole* creation' (VII. 3 Italics added). 'Punishment (*daṇḍa*) too was created by the Lord' (VII. 14). The first question pertains to the origin of the four *varṇas* and the emergence of the various

mixed *jātis* (I. 2) on account of man's perversity. In a significant sense man's corporate life is the central issue of the *Manusmṛti*.

The notion of *Brahmā* (I.9). *Nārāyaṇa* (I. 10), *Puruṣa* (I.10), *Virāṭ Puruṣa* (I.33) and *Prabhu* (I. 34) need to be examined carefully to find out whether Manu offers the notion of a personal God or Creator. Incidentally the creation of 'man' and 'woman' is referred to elsewhere and they were created to 'reproduce' (IX. 96). The notion of creation is viewed in one way in the philosophical systems. Speaking philosophically, the notion of creation is not acceptable in the Indian systems and there are at last some systems where the entire 'creation' is seen as an illusion. In the other systems the universe is seen as 'eternal' and beginningless. Manu's account needs to be seen and examined in the context of these speculative systems. The chapter on creation has several interesting and shrewd observations. But there are observations which are not clear to us today on account of their mythological overtones and metaphorical use of words. The similarity with the views of the Sāṁkhya system is striking. Regarding the origin of the Vedas the word used is *dohana* (I. 23) and not *Sṛṣṭi*. The chapter not only contains the views regarding the origin of the four *varṇas* but also their respective 'duties'. The position of the Brahmin is unfailingly extolled and the importance of *ācāra* is acknowledged (I. 108). '*Ācāraḥ paramo dharmaḥ*' (I. 108) has given rise to several interpretations; we shall examine a few in the sequel.

One of the *ślokas* (I. 29) says that the qualities assigned to the different creatures in the beginning clung to them spontaneously. If this is true then the scope for improvement, particulary in the human sphere, is impossible. If creation, in other words, determines the nature of things, then moral growth and progress, which necessarily presuppose freedom, is not possible. From the verses which deal with the 'fall' it appears that in Manu's scheme changes do take place, at least, genetically.

### (ii) *The Doctrine of Varṇa*

As observed earlier the concept of *varṇa* figures in the second *śloka*. The creation of the four *varṇas* is mentioned in I. 31 and is repeated in X. 4-5. There is no fifth *varṇa* (X. 4). The duties of the four *varṇas* are enumerated in I. 88-91. What appears to be

implicit in these enumerations is that any deviation in the performances of the stipulated duties is perverse, except perhaps in times of emergency. In so far as the *Manusmṛti* is concerned, *varṇas* and their interrelationships are taken for granted. One can only disturb them and bring about confusion if one seeks to tamper with them.

The concept of *varṇa* has been examined at length by almost all sociologists interested in Hinduism and India. The major portion of the discussions on *varṇas*, in so far as the *Manusmṛti* is concerned, is devoted to the Brahmins. The discussion centres round the normal duties of the four *varṇas*, regulations governing their marriages and prescriptions regarding their dresses, the kind of education they should receive, mostly about the learning of the Vedas, and suggestions regarding their names.

However, on closer examination of the concept of *Brāhmaṇa*, one comes across some difficulties regarding who is a *Brāhmaṇa*. There are at least three different views in this regard. In the first place, a *Brāhmaṇa* is one who performs the duties expected of a *Brāhmaṇa* and these duties have been mentioned at different places (I. 88 and X. 75). It is interesting to find a verse (II. 87) where a *Brāhmaṇa* is identified only on the strength of his muttering prayers; the stress on the performance or non-performance of rites becomes unimportant. There are verses (VIII. 339 and XI.11-21) which say that a *Brāhmaṇa* is entitled to take wood for sacrificial fire and grass for feeding (his own) cow and that these acts would not be treated as theft. The sacrificer could, if necessary, forcibly take a couple of articles needed for his sacrifices from the house of a *Śūdra* (XI. 11f.). The verse (XI. 19) makes a strange observation: 'He who takes property from the wicked and bestows it on the virtuous, transforms himself into a raft and carries both over the sea of misfortune.' It is strange to find the *Manusmṛti* arguing for the position that the end justifies the means.

In the second place, *Brāhmaṇa* appears as a normative notion (I. 97; II. 160-161 and XI. 35), i.e., a *Brāhmaṇa* is one who abides by certain moral virtues. Of all the *varṇas*, among the *Brāhmaṇas* alone there is a gradation (I. 97). A similar gradation has not been made among members belonging to the other *varṇas*.

Lastly, and paradoxically, a *Brāhmaṇa* is one who is born of Brāhmaṇa parents (I. 99; IX. 317-319; X.5 and XI.85). The last view, however, is neatly contradicted at another place (XII. 114). There are moreover, *Brāhmaṇas* who may be so by birth but they are not necessarily respectable because of their un-Brahminical professions (III. 152-153). There is a verse which suggests that a *Brāhmaṇa* should be a learned or a wise man in the sense that he is well-versed in scriptures and that he should fear praise and homage as if they were poison (II. 155 and 162). Another verse goes on to say that a *Brāhmaṇa* is pure by nature 'like fire and water' (X. 103). Elsewhere, it is said that a *Brāhmaṇa* must in no case get capital punishment (VIII. 380).

A *Kṣatriya's* functions are enumerated in I. 89. The protection of the subjects figures as the most important function (VII. 3 and 144; VIII. 305-306). Fame, glory and reputation are virtues which a king should care for (VIII. 344). Interestingly, these virtues are not associated with anyone other than a *Kṣatriya.* One is not quite clear about what happens to a *Kṣatriya* who is not a king. Nor is the relationship between the potentates of a feudal order dealt with in the *Smṛti.*

The duties of a *Vaiśya* are enumerated in I. 90. Some of these duties are reiterated and explained in IX. 326-333. The function of a *Śūdra* is to serve the three upper castes (I. 91 and IX. 334).

The notion of 'mixed *varṇas*' (*Saṃkara varṇa*) has been examined by several commentators. About two things Manu seems to be quite clear. First, there are only four *varṇas* (X. 4). Secondly, 'in all *varṇas* those children which are begotten in the direct order on wedded wives,* who are equal in caste and have been married as virgins, are to be regarded as belonging to the same caste as their fathers' (X. 5).

Mixed castes, therefore, are results of 'marriage' of partners belonging to different castes. Commentators in explaining V. 89 have said that *Saṃkara* are 'children born of father of a higher caste and mother of a lower caste'. If, however, we accept what Manu says in X. 5, it would be difficult not to include children born of fathers belonging to a lower caste. One commentator

*The concept of 'marriage' is discussed in III. 5-44. Manu recommends the marriage of partners belonging to one and the same *varṇa* (III. 12 and 43).

goes on to declare that the son of a *Brāhmaṇa* mother who is older than the father of the child, even when she has been legally wedded to one belonging to the same caste, will not be treated as a *Brāhmaṇa* (X. 5).

Mixed castes are the results of adulterous relationships (X.24). Mixed castes also arise when fathers neglect their prescribed duties and occupations (X. 24).

*Varṇa*, determined by birth, is undoubtedly a necessary condition for what could be called a certain 'style of life'. But a person's *varṇa* is not wholly or sufficiently determined by his birth; it depends on a few additional but not adventitious factors. It depends on *upanayana* or initiation (II. 36; 169-71). It is, moreover, determined by the person's occupation; his *ācāra* (conduct), proper performance of his marriage and in the case of the *Brāhmaṇa*, at least, on the acquisition of certain moral qualities along with deep learning of the Vedas.

The lowly position of the *Śūdra* is traceable to his origin from a base (*jaghanya*) limb like the Lord's feet (VIII.270). In fact, Manu's view that some parts of the body (and that even of the Lord) are purer than others (I.92 and V.132) is unintelligible.

At one place (VIII.22) it is said that a kingdom where the *Śūdras* are numerous or a kingdom populated by atheists and others who are not twice-born soon perishes. It is difficult to understand how *Śūdras* will not out-number the twice-born in a social set-up recommended by Manu. Some commentators have explained the *Śloka* to mean that *Śūdras* should not decide legal issues or that they should not hold high offices.

The significant point is that men belonging to the different *varṇas* must perform their stipulated duties properly and ungrudgingly (IV.14); a person belonging to a particular *varṇa* is not expected to perform the duties of another belonging to another *varṇa*, higher or lower, except in times of distress. But here too there are several constraints, Non-performance or malperformance leads to a 'fall', a topic which will be discussed in another section.

There is a *śloka* which recommends close cooperation between the two *varṇas*, the *Kṣatriya* and the *Brāhmaṇa* (IX.323). This *śloka*, incidentally, is found in two other important works, the *Gautamīya* and the *Vāśiṣṭha Dharmaśāstras*. The exact import of

the idea, I am afraid, has not been worked out by the commentators. What, for example, are the areas where cooperation could and ought to be sought? How could we possibly deny the need of an analogous cooperation between all the *varṇas*, including the *Vaiśyas* and the *Śūdras*? In an ideal set-up, I am sure, there would be cooperation between members of all the *varṇas*, high as well as low. In that sense all the *varṇas* are important and perhaps equally. Moreover, we see here an Indian version of 'social contract'.

(*iii*) *The Concept of Āśrama*

The notion of *āśrama*, let me add here on the authority of Kane,* is not found in the *Brāhmaṇas* or in the *Saṁhitās*. How the notion found its place in the Hindu social set-up is an issue we would expect an able scholar to tell us. The discussion on the *varṇas* is fairly widespread in the *Manusmṛti*, while the *āśramas* are mentioned at III.77-78 and VI. 87-90. We have seen earlier that the four different *varṇas* have their respective functions; likewise, there are certain functions associated with the four *āśramas*, or stages of life, through which men belonging to the three upper *varṇas* are expected to pass through.

*Manusmṛti* talks about three births (II.147 and II. 169). The first takes place when the child comes out of the mother's womb; the second when *upanayana* takes place and the third when he receives *yajñadīkṣā*. *Upanayana* has its own importance because this ceremony confers the right to perform the Vedic rituals. The physical birth (II.147) is seen as a natural occurrence compared to the second birth which is the result of *upanayana*. The parents along with the preceptor have been compared to glorious fire (II.231). With *upanayana*, however, begins the hard and austere life of a *Brāhmaṇa* which is described at length in the later half of chapter II. But one is not clear about the length of the stage called *Brahmacarya*. At one place (II.243) it is said that if he so wishes, a disciplined *Brahmacārī* can lead his whole life in this austere fashion; elsewhere (IV.257; VI. 35 and 36) it is said that a *Brahmacārin*, on completion of the period must lead the life of a house-holder, beget children and then alone he could hope for *mokṣa*. The life that is extolled is of the householder (III.77). If and when the first wife dies, a house-

**The History of the Dharmashastras*, Vol. II, Part I, p. 418.

holder has been advised to get married again and resume the life of a householder (V.168-169). What, however, has been said in VI.35 and 36 is denied in V.159. In the two *ślokas* (35 & 36) of Chapter VI it is said that he who seeks liberation without having paid his debts (to the great sages, to the manes and to the gods) sinks downwards. One is supposed to direct his mind to the attainment of final liberation after one has studied the Vedas in accordance with the rules and having sons and having offered sacrifices. But in V.159 it is said that thousands of *Brāhmaṇas*, chaste from their youth, have gone to heaven without continuing their race. Moreover, it is not clear if the passage through the various stages (*āśramas*) confers any completeness on the growth and development of the twice-born individual or it is just socially obligatory. Manu, it appears, is aware of the distinction drawn by Aristotle between a 'good citizen' and 'a good man' (*Nicomachean Ethics* VI. 5 and *Politics*, bk. III, ch. IV).

The manner in which Manu extols the life of a householder (III,77-78) is hardly compatible with the virtues acquired by a life-long *Brahmacārin* (II.248 and 249). In so far as this particular issue is concerned the question of *varṇa* is irrelevant. I am inclined to believe that the life of contemplation remains unreconciled with the life of action in Manu's scheme. Manu's stress on repaying the three debts (VI.35) and the daily performance of the five *yajñas* (III. 69; IV. 21 and V. 169) shows that Manu was primarily interested in the life a householder leads or a life of action which contributes towards the growth of the family and society's solidarity. Who, in any case, would decide when a person should give up his mundane belongings, rights and obligations? If he is a member of society then he cannot possibly recommend this course of life for himself. Manu does not seem to have taken into account the possibility of charlatans accepting the life of mendicants to escape social obligation. The life and obligations of a mendicant as Manu describes them (VI. 42-59) seem to be extremely hard and, in any case, *sannyāsa* (renunciation of the world) is recommended only for those who are the purest among *dvijas* (V. 108). However, Manu is never tired of reminding that the Vedas continue to be the source of all wisdom even for the mendicant (VI. 84). It is not clear whether Manu recommends that a *Vānaprasthin* should tend sacred fire and offer

sacrifices or that he should give them up (see VI. 4-5, 9-12 and VI. 25 and 43). Incidentally, commentators have offered different views on the propriety of 'suicide' while commenting on VI.31.

*(iv) The Concept of Dharma*

Here is one of the most important concepts. It is a word with a bewilderingly wide variety of connotations and hence I leave it untranslated. In the first place *Dharma* refers to the functions or duties of the different *varṇas* which I have already discussed. '*Varṇadharma*' not only refers to professions but also to social functions.

In the second place, *Dharma* is found identified with *Karma* which in turn is determined by '*varṇa*'. We find Manu describing the *Dharma* (more or less coterminous with the *Karma*) of a *Vaiśya* (IX. 325, 333) and of a *Śūdra* (IX. 334 f). Thirdly, *Dharma* is related to sex in that men and women have their respective *dharmas* (V. 146f; IX. 1f.). Fourthly, *Dharma* has something to do with *āśramas* (IV. 1f; VI. 1-32 and 88-89).

Fifthly, *Dharma* has a close relation to *yuga* which itself has serveral meanings. *Yuga* is used for 'aeons', four in number (I.85). *Yuga* also refers to the period reigned over by a monarch (IX. 301). What is *Dharma* in one *yuga* may not be so in another.

Sixthly, *Dharma* refers to the duties of a monarch; an entire chapter has been devoted to this topic (Ch. VII.).

Seventhly, *Dharma* is something 'natural' (I. 30).

Eighthly, *Dharma* refers to certain moral qualities (VI.92) like patience, temperance, purity, etc.

Ninthly, *Dharma* is said to be supreme (VIII. 17); it is in this sense that *Dharma* alone is the individual's 'dearest object'.

Tenthly, *Dharma* is equated with *ācāra* or custom (I. 108).

Eleventhly, *Dharma* is what learned *Brāhmaṇas* lay down or prescribe (XII. 108-110).

Twelthly, *Dharma* has its source in the Vedas (II. 7).

Finally, Dharma is also determined by the individual's role (VIII. 335).

*Guṇa dharma* and *naimittika* are phrases used by Kulluka, a 15th cent. commentator. *Deśadharma*, *jāti dharma* and *pāṣaṇḍa dharma* are found in I. 118; *janapada dharma* is found in VIII. 41.

The verse which says that *dharma* is four-footed (I. 81) has been explained in different ways by different commentators: (*a*) The four feet represent the four principal priests at the sacrifice; (*b*) they represent the four *varaṇas*; (*c*) they represent the four chief means of gaining *dharma* — *tapasyā* (austerity), *jñāna* (knowledge), *yajña* (sacrifices) and *dāna* (charity); (*d*) they represent the four kinds of speech mentioned in the Ṛg Veda, I. 164. 45.

It is obviously difficult to ascertain if *Dharma* has, what I would call, a 'master meaning'. The temptation to identify one meaning and give it a prominent place, though great, must be avoided.

(*v*) *The Supremacy of the Vedas*

The Vedas are supreme almost in every respect (II. 13, 14, and 166; VI. 84; XII. 94). The Vedas contain the truth regarding the nature of things and the prescriptions contained in the Vedas are wholly binding. The Vedas are *aprameya* (XII. 94); that is, the validity of the Vedic truths and injunctions cannot be ascertained by the limited human mind. Brahmins alone are authorized to teach the Vedas (X. 1); while the *Kṣatriyas* and the *Vaiśyas* are allowed only to learn the Vedas. The *Śūdra* has no access to the Vedas. The word *Śāstra* has, at least, three meanings. In one sense it means what is today called 'Science' or systematised and organised knowledge; in a second sense, it means a treatise or exposition of the principles of a subject and, finally, it is used in the sense of 'injunction'. Incidentally, the Vedas are accepted as the final authority by all the systems of philosophy except Buddhism, Jainism and Cārvāka thinkers.

(*vi*) *The Doctrine of 'Rebirth'*

This is another doctrine which was widely accepted by nearly all Indian thinkers in antiquity. It is associated with the doctrine of *Karma*. An individual's subsequent births are determined by the kind of actions he performs; these actions are performed by his mind, speech and body (XII.5, 6 and 7). There are a few philosophical observations pertaining to the nature of self and its relationship to body; however, these observations are not always clear. Manu accepts and reiterates the widely accepted view that the soul is born again and again. Unfortunately, how-

ever, 'rebirth' is used metaphorically in at least two places (II.147 and 169). There are observations regarding a Brahmin losing his caste if he performs un-Brahminical acts like discontinuing the Vedic studies or taking to trade in certain commodities (II.168 and X.2). On the other hand, it has also been said that an Aryan who performs the acts of a non-Aryan does not lose his caste (X.73). In Chapter XII there are detailed descriptions of the lowly births which accrue to men who perform lowly acts. The language is often abusive. Some of the points relevant to the understanding of the notion of rebirth will be discussed later in connection with the notion of 'mobility'.

(*vii*) *The 'Goal-Seeking' Nature of Man*

This is mentioned specifically in II.2, 3 and 4 and Manu's generalization appears to be based on empirical observations (II.4). There seems to be an attempt at combining two diverse human characteristics, one belonging to the realm of facts and the other belonging to the realm of values. The fact is that man is a creature who desires. But he *ought* to transcend desires and stop seeking goals. I doubt if Manu has been successful in combining the 'is' and 'ought'. We should remember in this connection that Manu does not invoke the notion of 'grace'.

Manu's way of thinking, it appears, is that if man is by nature goal-seeking, then there should be rules to guide this seeking. But whence do we get these rules? Manu's answer is that there are a few acknowledged sources of the rules. They are the Vedas, the injunctions approved by scholars or learned men who have critically reflected upon the Vedas and are enshrined in the *Smṛtis*, manners and customs of wise men and, finally, one's own conscientious reflection (II.6). Scholars have raised several searching questions. Are these sources arranged in any order whatsoever and, if so, is the order descending or ascending? What happens if and when there are conflicting views?[7] To my mind, the Vedas remain the highest court of appeal. The notion of *Saṃkalpa* is found in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VII.4. 1 and 2 and 5.1)

(*viii*) *The Notion of Hierarchy*

There are many verses where Manu refers to the superiority or seniority of certain *varṇas* over other *varṇas* or of certain pro-

fessions and even of certain virtues. The notion of a hierarchical order pervades all through the *Smṛti*.

In so far as the supremacy of the *varṇas* and the professions is concerned, we should refer to X.144f. In II. 92, Manu refers to the supremacy of mind over the senses.* Elsewhere (IX. 18) he refers to the supremacy of man over woman; he talks of the supremacy of the preceptor over his disciple in II. 192, 194 and 198. The question of 'equality' never figures. As I have mentioned earlier, Manu thinks that the *varṇa* hierarchy should reveal itself in the names of men and women belonging to the different *varṇas*, in their attires and in the manner they greet. The concept of hierarchy has attrached the attention of a large variety of sociologists and philosophers.

At the heart of the notion of hierarchy there is the tacit acknowledgement of the notion of 'power'. The 'power' I am referring to either operates in a norm-governed framework or in a framework where brute force alone counts. In either case power lends authority to some and deprives the majority of it. The result is a hierarchy leading necessarily to some form of inequality. This inequality is often legitimized and is viewed as morally correct or even edifying. At other times, this hierarchical order is seen as morally degrading and is challenged or overthrown.

The notion of hierarchy is viewed differently according to two different perceptions regarding the nature and essence of man. When man conceives himself primarily as a rational being, his perception of objects and situations, feelings and passions is of one kind. Man as a *knower* has no need to choose, order and arrange since everything as object of knowledge is equally important or unimportant. When, however, man conceives himself primarily as a *desiring creature*, he is bound to choose, order and arrange not only objects and situations but himself and his own feelings, passions, needs and requirements. Hierarchy necessarily emerges out of this order and arrangement.

The importance of *Saṃkalpa vis-a-vis citta* has been debated ever since the period of the *Upaniṣads*. *Karma* may be noble or base, good or bad but *jñāna* is either erroneous or non-erroneous.

*This could be traced back to the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, 67.

Knowledge gets distorted because of the knower's desires, feelings and passions. Desirelessness thus is an essential precondition of Knowledge. Manu was not unaware of the need of transcending desires (II.2). The question that suggests itself at this stage is: Is it possible for a 'desiring creature' (if that is how man is seen) to assume an attitude of neutrality? The *Gītā* sought to resolve this problem, but that is a different story. How far this could be resolved in the scheme worked out by Manu, who nowhere accepts a personal God, is difficult to say. This takes us back to the Aristotelian distinction between 'a good citizen' and 'a good man'. In the language of the *Upaniṣads*, 'men of knowledge' carve out for themselves one path while 'men of action' another path. Men who acquire the highest knowledge go beyond birth and death. Those who *act* do not go beyond birth and death.

(*ix*) *The Notion of Kingship or Monarchy*

A king is father to his subjects (VIII.80). A kingdom is conceived as an enlarged family. The *Kṣatriya's* function, as seen earlier, is to look after his subjects (I.89; VII, 143 and 144; X. 80). What, however, does this mean? In Manu's scheme, it means that the distinction between the four *varṇas* should be scrupulously preserved. The whole of Chapter VIII is devoted to 'politics', consisting of discussions on administration, justice, punishment, etc. which need not be recounted here.

A *Kṣatriya* cannot, rather should not, earn his livelihood by performing the duties of a *Brāhmaṇa* (X. 95). But a *Brāhmaṇa* can, if necessary, earn his livelihood by performing the functions of a *Kṣartiya* or even that of a *Vaiśya* (X. 81 and 82). But can he, then, still be said to retain his caste?

There are two questions whose answers cannot be gleaned from the *Manusmṛti*. First, what happens to a *Kṣatriya* who cannot be a king? Secondly, what precisely is the relationship between a small and a more powerful monarch? The observations in II. 73 are not sufficiently illuminating.

Manu is of the view that ministers should preferably be *Brāhmaṇas* (VII. 58 and 59). But at two places (III. 64 and 153) it is said that a *Brāhmaṇa* is not expected to serve a king. The notion of the participation of the people in administration is nowhere mentioned. The subjects have no voice in the manner they are

ruled over. It is difficult to see how without a modicum of 'contract', the monarch and the people can come close to each other. But this seems to have escaped Manu's notice.

The King's Court, if one could say so, described in VII.27-34, is surely different from the *pariṣads* of learned *Brāhmaṇas* described in XII. 111f. In the assembly of the learned *Brāhmaṇas* the *Yati* or the *Sannyāsin* is not included as a member (XII.111). Manu also suggests that the King's Court and the assembly of the learned *Brāhmaṇas* should act in close cooperation (XI.323). Are they then two different institutions?

### (x) *The Five Cardinal Virtues*

The five cardinal virtues for all the members of the four *varṇas* (X. 63) are non-violence, truth, non-possession, purity and control of the sense organs. It has been argued that here is a conception of man which cuts across the barrier of *varṇas*; perhaps there is some strength in the argument. Unfortunately, the details of these values have not been discussed at length. One wonders why *dāna* (charity) does not figure in this list.

### (xi) *The Concept of Mobility, 'Gati' and 'Fall'*

The concept of *gati* is fairly complex; it has been used in different contexts. In one sense (II. 168) it means a downward movement of a member belonging to one *varṇa* when he performs actions not sanctioned by the *Śāstras*. In another sense (VI.61) it refers to what happens to a man when he goes to another world after his death on account of evil deeds. In a third sense, close to the second mentioned above, *gati* is determined by a person's deeds—physical, mental and those belonging to speech (XII. 3 and 40).

There is an 'upward movement' on account of marriages of the successive generations in higher *varṇas* (X.64). It could be said to be an improvement of the stock. There is another kind of upward movement which takes place after death, in the next life, on account of acquisition of noble values (IX. 335).

The 'downward movement' (in one's lifetime) takes place on account of the performance of prohibited actions (II. 168 and 169; X. 92; XI. 98 and 176). And, of course, there is the down-

ward movement in the next life on account of evil deeds done by an individual.

Closely connected with the notion of *gati* are the notions of *Jāti-utkarṣa* and *jati-apakarṣa* (X. 42 and 44). Here too there is a downward movement on account of prohibited marriages but the fall occurs for the offsprings (X.41). One is tempted to ask: how do we account for the fall of the *offspring* ? 'Fall' in that case would mean a degeneration and should not have moral overtones.

There is a moral fall on account of hypocrisy, a man given to pretentious living (IV. 195-97). Finally, there is a fall on account of non-performance of the stipulated functions (X. 43 and 44). In Manu's scheme a *Śūdra* cannot commit any sin which would cause a fall (X. 126). One would like to ask: is it possible for a *Śūdra* to achieve *utkarṣa* (improvement)?

(*xii*) *The Concept of Karma*

Like *Dharma*, *Karma* too is a concept which is widely used in Indian philosophical literature. The term is left untranslated on account of several meanings attached to it.

In the first place *Karma* means nothing more than a 'quality' or 'function' with which things are naturally endowed (I. 29 & 30).

In the second place, *Karma* like *Dharma* is relative to *varṇa* (I. 88f; IV. 3; VIII. 410; IX. 326f; X. 74f).

In the third place, *Karma* is equated with *tapasyā* or penance, (XI.125 f) as perhaps it involves 'effort'.

In the fourth place, *Karma* is said to have three sources, the mind, the body and the speech (XII. 6, 7 and 8).

In the fifth place, *Karma* is said to be the cause of happiness as well as unhappiness (VI. 79).

In the sixth place, *Karma* of certain kinds lead to '*niḥśreyasa*' (IV. 14 and XII. 82) while at a different place *ātmajñāna* (self-knowledge) is said to lead to *mokṣa* (XII. 92). That *Karma* may lead to *niḥśreyasa* would not be accepted by the *Vedāntin*. This gives grounds for believing that the relationship between the path of action and the path of knowledge, on which the controversy is fairly old, is not discussed by Manu.

In the seventh place, *Karma* is related to *jāti* and the *jāti* of a

person can be known from the manner in which he acts. Perhaps there is a circularity here.

In the eighth place, the notion of *Karma* acquires a complex character when Manu introduces the twin notions of *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti* (XII. 88). *Pravṛtti* is said to lead to *abhyudaya*, a concept found in the *Mīmāṁsā* system while *nivṛtti* leads to *niḥśreyasa*. The distinction between *abhyudaya* and *niḥśreyasa* has not been discussed by Manu. *Svarga* ('heavenly bliss' according to Bühler) mentioned in IV. 246, is gained by one who is persevering, gentle, patient, one who practises non-injury and one who controls his sense-organs. In VI. 96 Manu appears to be saying that one who cares for the highest state (*paramā gatiḥ*) should even cease to care for *svarga*. *Svarga*, therefore, cannot be the highest goal.

The question which strikes one in this connection is whether Manu has drawn a distinction between duties which are legal and duties which are essentially moral. The assumption behind this distinction is that legal duties pertain to a person *qua* social being, i.e., as a member of an economic-political-social order while the moral duties pertain to an individual *per se*, independent of what Kant would call 'practical anthropology'. There are suggestions that Manu was aware of the distinction, but he never seems to have faced the issues arising from it squarely.

Manu is nowhere found suggesting that *Karma* causes 'bondage', a strain of thought having a fairly ancient origin. There are a few *ślokas* where the importance of *Karma* has been lowered (XII. 84 and 85), but *Karma* has never been referred to as a source of bondage.

## IV

## The Key Concepts

### (*i*) *The Concept of Ācāra*

While examining the several meanings of *Dharma* I referred to I. 108-110 where the concept of *ācāra* figures prominently. It has given rise to several interpretations in our times, particularly because the idea of 'custom' figures so prominently in ancient Roman law. Some have distinguished *dharma* from *ācāra* on the ground that *dharma* has a transcendental source while *ācāra* is

'human, all too human'. Others have held that *dharma* needs to be distinguished from *ācāra* since *dharma* in an important sense cannot always be traced back to custom.

The concept of *ācāra* occupies a position between what I have called the 'Given' and the 'Key Concept'. If one were to wholly accept what is asserted at I. 107 and 108, *ācāra* should be treated as a 'Given'. But the possibility of departure from *ācāra* is acknowledged in the next verse (I. 109) and another distinction is drawn between *sadācāra* and *ācāra* in II. 18 and 155. One gets the impression that the performance of *ācāra* is a matter of human will and effort. In that case *ācāra* is a code (I. 107). A 'code' is 'given'. But *ācāra* in the sense of due and conscientious observance of this 'code', (perhaps having a transcendental source), being a matter of human will and effort, is a 'Key Concept'.

The notion of *sadācāra* has geographical overtones (II. 17). But Manu explains *sadācāra* elsewhere in a different manner (IV. 155f).

*Ācārā* too has several meanings.

*Ācāra* or rather *sadācāra* is what the disciplined Brahmins recommend (II. 6) and it is rooted in the recommendation of the Vedas. *Ācāra*, secondly, is said to be the foundation of *tapasyā* (I. 110). And *tapasyā* is used, at least once, as a synonym of the proper functioning of the duties allotted to the respective *varṇas* (XI. 236).

The conflict between *dharma* and *ācāra* is evident at several places. *Dharma* says one thing about a 'twice-born' marrying a *Śūdra* woman (II, 15, 16, 17, and 18) while 'custom' may say something else (IX. 153); similarly, *dharma* says one thing about eating meat (V. 55) but custom something else (II. 227 and IV. 250). About *niyoga*, *dharma* has one thing to say (IX. 66) but 'custom' may permit it (IX. 59). About the remarriage of 'widows', *dharma* has one view (IX. 157), but custom suggests something else (IX. 190).

### (ii) *The Concepts of Śauca and Śuddhi*

The twin concepts of *śauca* and *aśauca* (purity and impurity) are associated with birth and death and the rules governing their observation are fairly complex. The concept of *aśauca* is dis-

cussed at length in Chapter V. Purity and impurity are not exactly concepts of 'hygiene' although they could be explained in that way in many contexts. Persons who wish to remain pure should not touch those who are impure, nor should they touch their belongings. When a death occurs, persons related to the dead person become impure no matter wherever they are and the period of 'impurity' varies from *varṇa* to *varṇa*. A disciple has to observe *aśauca* for a certain period when his preceptor dies (V. 80). Utensils and instruments, pots and pans become 'impure' on certain occasions; the manner in which they should be washed to restore purity is discussed at length depending on the materials out of which they are made. Droppings and urine of the cow are used to restore purity. The details of the ablution of the various limbs of the human body are found in chapter V; one would find many orthodox Brahmins even today observing these rules scrupulously. One thing which appears rather strange is that the mouth of a woman is always seen as pure (V. 130). Elsewhere, Manu says that orifices of the human body below the navel are impure (V. 132).

There is a verse which enumerates the different purifiers in a summary fashion. They are knowledge (of the highest principle), austerities, fire, holy food, water, earth, control of the sense organs, smearing cowdung, the wind, the sacred rites, the sun and the time (V. 105). The next verse emphasises that a person is pure if he earns wealth with clean hands and not he who purifies himself with earth and water. The verse V. 109 identifies the various parts of the person and their respective purifiers. The body is cleansed by water, the mind (or the internal organ) by truthfulness, the soul by learning and austerities and the intellect by knowledge. This verse shows the importance which Manu attaches to knowledge.

### (*iii*) *The Notion of Daṇḍa*

*Daṇḍa* is another untranslatable term having three or four different senses. Ordinarily it refers to a rod made out of the twigs of certain trees: the rods are to be used by the *Brahmacārin*, the wood used will have to be different depending on the *varṇa* to which the *Brahmacārin* belongs (II. 45).

Secondly, *daṇḍa* stands for punishment. The metaphor *daṇḍa*

must have had its origin in the ancient practice of hitting the wrong-doer with a rod (by a person authorised to inflict punishment) (VII. 18).

Thirdly, it is used in the sense of law (VII. 14; IX. 263).

Finally, it is used in the sense of restraint or discipline (XII.10). A man who has controlled the movement of his limbs, his mind and his speech is called a *tridaṇḍin*. There is a verse (VIII. 263) where *daṇḍa* is used in the sense of punishment as well as a symbol of law, i.e. *rod.*

The notion of 'reward' hardly figures in *Manusmṛti.* Maybe, Manu thought that a duty done properly and conscientiously is its own reward.

(*iv*) *The Notions of Vinaya and 'Moderation'*

*Vinaya* is often equated with moderation which is already a virtue in matters of eating (II. 57). Moderation is often equated with a stoical indifference towards praise and blame (II. 161 and 162). Those who are affluent are recommended not to show off their wealth, particularly when *Brāhmaṇas* are invited to a feast (III. 125). Invitation to pious *Brāhmaṇas* to feasts was considered to be a part of religious performances.

A monarch was expected to learn modesty and discipline from the wise and elderly *Brāhmaṇa* scholars (VII. 39). Control over greed, lust and anger was always considered a virtue (VII. 49). The control of the senses with the help of one's reason is invariably emphasized (II. 96,98-100). What could be called 'good manners', like not producing unnecessary noise by clapping and shouting even when one is excited, are strongly recommended (IV. 64). At one place Manu recommends that a beast of burden like a horse should never be excessively whipped (IV.68).

But the concept of 'moderation', it appears, is forgotten when Manu describes certain rigorous expiatory penances. An attitude of detachment towards persons and situations is recommended at several places (IV. 12; VI. 57 and 60). The moral autonomy of the individual has been considered to be one of the greatest value (IV. 159). The notion of *ātmatuṣṭi* or *ātmaprasāda* figures at least at three places (II. 12; IV. 161 and XII. 37) giving the impression that Manu is an egoist. Perhaps Manu thought that a slavish emulation of social manners is morally reprehensible. One

must, in other words, live according to one's mature convictions.

Manu, strangely, appears to be unusually harsh in so far as behaviour towards one's enemy is concerned (III. 144 and IV. 133; also see VII. 102).

(v) *The Concept of Dāna (Charity)*

There are a number of verses on the importance of *dāna* as a value (IV. 127f). But the benefits of charity as they are enlisted in the verses are not necessarily praiseworthy. The idea of making gifts for its own sake does not emerge anywhere. On the other hand, gifts are to be offered so that one accumulates *dharma* (IV. 238), as if *dharma* were a material object. What, however, is objected to is the announcement regarding gifts (IV. 236). Gifts, however, are to be offered to 'proper' persons (III. 180). The gift of the Vedic wisdom is considered to be the most valuable gift (IV. 233). *Dāna* should have figured as a 'cardinal virtue' since it is one of those virtues which men belonging to all the *varṇas* may practise.

(vi) *The Concept of Pāpa (Sin)*

The notion is intimately associated with the notion of *prāyaś-citta* or expiation. The three kinds of sin which call for *prāyaś-citta* are:

(*a*) the non-performance of the acts recommended by the scriptures,
(*b*) the performance of unworthy acts, and
(*c*) acts flowing from attachment to sensual pleasures (XI. 44).

Manu also draws a distinction between wrong acts done intentionally and those which are done unintentionally (XI. 46).

The concept of sin is also associated with the notion of 're-birth' in the sense that the nature of sin committed in previous births determines the kinds of blemishes from which a person suffers in this life or in the lives to come. One who has committed a sin must perform *prāyaścitta* (XI. 47). Some of the sins which were perhaps widely found in his times have been enumerated at length (XI. 49-52). The classification of these acts with a view to building a theory is not easy. The nature and seriousness

of sins as Manu deals with them depends on several factors. Sin, in the first place, depends on the nature of the act performed; secondly, it depends on the age, health and the sex of the wrong-doer (VIII. 312). Thirdly, it depends on the *varṇa* to which the wrong-doer belongs. In recommending punishments to be inflicted on a man who has committed adultery, the court should take into account if the woman involved was guarded or unguarded. Fourthly, the seriousness of the crime depends on the *āśrama* to which the wrong-doer belongs (VIII. 360f and XI. 121). There are several theories which seek to explain and discover the principle behind the recommendation of punishments. Some have suggested that the principle is 'pollution', while others have suggested that it is the privileges enjoyed by the different *varṇas*.

The term *puṇya* figures only once in the text (XI. 39). In the sense in which it is used it does not seem to have a moral overtone.

It means 'lucky'. In the *Upaniṣads* the term has an ethical overtone in the sense that *pāpa* and *puṇya* are believed to determine one's future birth (see *Bṛh. Up.*, III.2. 13; IV. 3.15; IV. 4.22 and *Taitt. Up.*, II.9). Virtuous acts, in some sense, could be performed according to Manu only by those who were able to pay the requisite fees to the priests.

### (*vii*) *The Concept of Prāyaścitta*

As mentioned earlier, this notion mentioned in XI. 44, has an important place in Manu's scheme, The nature of *prāyaścitta* depends on the *varṇa* of the performer, on the magnitude of the committed crime and so on. Manu also makes a distinction between acts which are criminal and those which are otherwise. The details of the crime committed to justify *prāyaścitta* have been enumerated and classified in XI. 55 f. The expiatory acts include penances of several kinds, ritual ablutions and bestowing gifts.

### (*viii*) *The Concepts of Anutāpa and Santāpa*

Manu is not wholly unaware of the 'inner man'. The notion of *anutāpa* (repentance) figures in XI. 228 f. where Manu has already described the various kinds of expiatory acts. A sinful act, if confessed, is washed off. Austerity and reflection are also recommended as means of washing off sins. A sinful act causes

'heaviness' and to regain 'lightness' one must continue to perform expiatory acts (XI. 234). It is in this connection that the term *tapasyā* is used; *tapasyā* here appears to be the same as *varṇa* duties (XI. 236). It is difficult to make out what the term means when it is used in the context of worms, insects, serpents, birds and animals (XI. 241). Among other duties, the duty of acquiring wisdom (*jñāna*) is considered foremost in washing off sins (XI. 247), and a little later wisdom is identified with the knowledge enshrined in the Vedas (XI. 263).

Manu, as observed earlier, does not draw a distinction between what is morally right and what is legally right and correspondingly between what is 'legally punishable' and 'morally blameworthy'. Does *puṇya* mean nothing more than performing '*varṇa* determined' duties meticulously ?

(*ix*) *The Concept of Yajña*

A householder, according to Manu, possesses as it were five slaughter-houses. They are the hearth, the grinding-stone, the broomstick, the pestle and mortar and the water pitcher (III. 68). In order to expiate the sins committed by the householder, on account of using these objects, he should daily perform five 'sacrifices'. One who performs these *yajñas* is not tainted by the sins in the five places of slaughter (III. 69-71). Manu goes on to describe the sacrifices in the subsequent *ślokas*.

*Yajñas* are to be performed by all those who are twice-born (I. 88-90). Many thinkers, ancient as well as modern, have used the word *yajña* in a metaphorical sense. I doubt if *yajña* could have any metaphorical overtone for Manu as it is used in XI. 38-40. It is clearly stated there that a man of modest means should not offer *Śrauta* sacrifices.

## V

## Inconsistencies and Incongruities

Some of the inconsistencies are conceptual in nature while others seem to arise because of a lack of logical relatedness; yet others appear because they seem morally unattractive.

In I. 8 it has been observed that water was the *first* thing to be created. A little later (I. 20) it is said to be the *fourth* in order of

creation preceded by sound, touch and form and yet elsewhere water is said to be deformed heat (*tejas*) (I. 78).

There are verses (III. 77, 78 and VI. 89) where the life of a householder has been glorified and the stage of the householder is said to be the noblest. But there are verses where renunciation has been eulogized (II. 13 & 95). The important question is: how and when is renunciation to be performed ? Must one perform the duties of a *Brahmacārin* and those of a householder before he renounces the world ? There are some verses which appear to respond to this question affirmatively (IV. 257 and VI. 37). It is said that one who chooses the path of *mokṣa* without repaying the 'debts' is going in the wrong direction. On the other hand, there are verses which recommend a life of perpetual celibacy (II. 248 and 249). Does it mean that according to Manu there are two kinds of men with different inclinations and aptitudes?

Manu's observations on the position of women too are inconsistent. There are more *ślokas* where 'women' have been seen as lowly and despicable creatures. Here too there are descriptions as well as prescriptions. The verses where Manu is describing the lowly position of women are II. 213, 214 and 215; IX. 2, 3, 14 and 18. At one place it is said that a woman should not be present in the meeting where the monarch is discussing with his ministers (VII. 149). A woman is generally not to be accepted as a witness (VIII. 77).

There are quite a few verses where an elevated position is accorded to women (III.56). A mother is adored (II.145). Almost in the next verse it is said that off-springs are the results of parents' lust (III. 147). The implication is that a person is 'born' in the true sense only when he becomes a *dvija*. Marriage is seen as indissoluble (IX. 101), but is never seen as monogamous. A maiden having sex with a man belonging to a lower caste is seen as a turpitude while her having sex with one belonging to a higher caste is judged leniently (VIII. 365). Manu does not recommend that a girl should be married off at any cost. He even recommends spinsterhood if a proper bridegroom is not available (IX. 89). Manu goes so far as to suggest that a girl can find a husband for herself, if necessary (IX. 91). But this is *prima facie* incompatible with what he has said earlier (IX. 2 and 3).

In so far as the duties and character of a king are concerned,

Manu's approach is somewhat Machiavellian (VII. 105 f, 195). False statements, made by a witness in certain situations are justified (VIII. 103 f and 112).

Manu's observations on *svarga*, *mokṣa* and a few other terms are not at all clear. *Svarga* is attained by one who practises certain virtues (IV. 246). Elsewhere, *Svarga* is valued poorly compared to what is called *paramā gatiḥ*, the highest goal. It is not clear if *svarga* and *mokṣa* are one and the same or different in Manu's view. Attainment of *mokṣa* traditionally means freedom from the cycle of birth and death. *Svarga* does not confer this liberation. *Mokṣa* is valued by the *Vedāntins* and those who choose the path of knowledge while *svarga* is sought by the follower of the *Mīmāṁsā*. It is not clear if Manu recommends the views of the *Mīmāṁsā* thinkers or the views of the *Vedāntic* thinkers. Apparently, Manu was not acquainted with the tradition of '*Bhakti*'.

Manu's excursus into metaphysics is least illuminating. The notion of *bhūtātmā* (the self consisting of the elements) as distinct from *Kṣetrajña* (the knower of the field) is found in XII. 12. Incidentally, *bhūtātmā* refers to the individual soul in V. 109. In explaining the meaning of *ātman* in XII, 85 most commentators have distinguished it from *Kṣetrajña*. (One which impels the self to action is called *Kṣetrajña* while the one who acts is called *bhūtātmā*.) The 'Body' is treated as a prison and in a couple of verses it is described in a rather lurid manner (VI. 76 and 77). Earlier, however, it is said that one should not inflict pain on one's body (II. 100) as, perhaps, it was encouraged in certain schools of the Yoga system. One should be able to control his sense organs with the help of one's mind and reason.

Over and above *deha* (body) and *Kṣetrajña* there is the *jīva* (XII. 13). *Jīva* is another word used widely in the philosophical literature with a wide variety of meanings. It is not clear in which sense Manu uses it. The notion of *śarīra*, moreover, is not entirely clear because on the death of a person another *śarīra* is born (XII. 16). The word *ātman* found in XII. 24 is said to possess three qualities, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, translated by some as goodness, activity and darkness. Some of the observations made are rather trite. What, however, is needed is to work out in greater detail, from the scattered observations, the interrelationship

between 'body' and 'soul', to use the terms most broadly. Taken as they are, they give rise to a large variety of interpretations; in fact, a number of *ślokas* in Chapter XII (12 to 19) have been commented upon in very different ways by the ancient commentators.

Knowledge or *jñāna* at one place is said to be of three kinds (II. 117); secular, Vedic and spiritual. But what exactly is meant by the knowledge of worldly affairs? In the Indian tradition a good many branches of knowledge are in some way related to *mokṣa*. How do we, anyway, draw the lines between these three kinds of knowledge? Is, for example, knowledge of worldly affairs a preparation for the Vedic learning or is it a hindrance? In what way is the Vedic learning a preparation for spiritual knowledge? Can one hope to acquire spiritual knowledge without acquiring the knowledge enshrined in the Vedas? It is difficult to come across any reference to the famous dichotomy between *jñāna* and *karma* in the *Manusmṛti*. The terms *upaniṣad* and *rahasya* (a synonym of the *Upaniṣadic* knowledge) are found at several places in the *Manusmṛti* (II. 150 and 245; VI. 29 and XI. 263) and Manu surely was referring to what has come down to us as the major *Upaniṣads*. If this is true then Manu should have been acquainted with the controversy found in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (1.2, 7-13). Strangely, there is no reference to *parā* and *aparā vidyā*; in fact, one rarely comes across the notion of *vidyā* so commonly found in the *Upaniṣads*.

We do not come across a sustained discussion on education although some of the terms associated with teaching and education have been expounded here and there (II. 109-16). The terms *guru* and *ācārya* are defined in II. 140 and 142. The stress seems to be on rituals (II. 69f). The teacher and the taught are never seen as partners in their common quest of knowledge. On the other hand, the *guru* is more like a master and the disciple is often seen as a chattel. It is true that the *guru* on his part should be kind and gentle towards the disciple (II. 159). The sentiment expressed in the *Kṛṣṇa Yajur Veda Śāntivacanam* (see *Taitt. Up.* XX.1) is not found in the *Manusmṛti*.

Some verses stress the fact that certain things are hard to achieve single-handed. This is particularly true on the part of a monarch. Hence Manu suggests that a monarch should be assisted by a group of (seven or eight) ministers; these ministers should

have had their ancestors in the service of the monarch's family (VII. 54f).

Manu talks of the solitariness of man (IV. 240). In this verse the singleness is descriptive, but in VI. 80 and 81 loneliness is prescribed as a means to salvation. The notion of the 'inner man' figures but vaguely.

Manu perhaps belongs to an age when eating meat had begun to be looked down upon as undesirable. Eating meat is seen as 'natural' (V. 56) but it is recommended that one should abstain from it. The eating of meat meant for ritual sacrifices is approved but to consume meat on sundry occasions is disapproved (V.31). It would, however, be difficult to judge Manu as a strict vegetarian (V. 30). There are *ślokas* which commend *ahiṁsā* (V. 49, 50 and 51).

The legal and moral overtones of virtue (*puṇya*) and vice (*pāpa*) are not clearly shown. *Puṇya* means the avoidance of sinful acts. The positive aspect of *puṇya* is seldom emphasised. The concepts of *bhakti, prema, ānanda, kṛpā* and *prasāda* which were to figure so prominently in the secular as well as religious literatures later do not figure at all. The view that these concepts were introduced at a later period largely on account of our contacts with other religious traditions does not seem to be entirely acceptable. Some of these notions are found in *Pāṇini's Sūtras* (IV.3.95) and in the *Śvetāśvatara Up.*, 6.23. The notion of *ānanda* is there in the *Upaniṣads*. From what Manu says in IX. 96 it appears that in Manu's view men and women were created only for the maintenance of the race. The dichotomy between *kāma* and *prema* which figures so frequently in the *bhakti* literature is unknown. 'Friendship' too is a concept conspicuous by its absence. The verses where it is mentioned at all (VII.206-208), treat friendship as something expedient on the part of a monarch.

In a work of this kind one expects references to poetry, music, drama, painting and similar other arts, but they are seldom taken into account. Those who are associated with these arts are not treated as 'respectable' persons. The temper, on the whole, is highly puritanical.

Penury, poverty, destitution or misery on account of old age, again, are nowhere taken into account. There is at least one verse

(XI. 40) which prescribes that those who are poor should not perform certain ritual sacrifices.

Manu does not seem to be interested in children, their games, their education and physical and mental exercises. The years they spend with their parents before they go to the *guru's āśrama*, it appears, go unnoticed by Manu.

I would like to mention some of the concepts introduced by the commentators which are not there in the text. While commenting on VII. 76, one commentator mentions that the king should build a temple (*devālaya*) in the precincts of his spacious palace. Another commentator refers to *Īśvara* while commenting on XII. 31. Neither *devālaya* nor *Īśvara* are there in the text. Commenting on things of enjoyment which a monarch should offer to *Brāhmaṇas* (VII.79), *Nārāyaṇa,* a commentator, includes 'wives' among the gifts! Commenting upon III. 50, one commentator thinks that an ascetic who has lost all his children should approach his wife during two nights in each month. This view, however, has been criticised by another commentator.

One verse (III. 78) has given rise to a controversy regarding the propriety of ascetics becoming teachers of the Vedic wisdom. Some think that householders alone are to be the teachers of the Vedas.

## VI

## Conclusion

In concluding this note, the question that naturally comes to my mind is: Is Manu relevant today? Or, in other words, what is living and what is dead in Manu? I think we are obliged to respond to this question firstly because it is a fact that being Indian we have a moral duty to articulate this strand of tradition conceptually, as far as that is possible. In the second place, Manu's views form a part of that huge spectrum of human history called antiquity which, with all our achievements of science and technology, we simply cannot disown. Such an act of severing is neither possible nor advisable. A cursory comparision of the *Smṛti* with similar other works found in the traditions of antiquity—Chinese, Greek, Roman, Jewish and Islamic—will convince any one that the work deserves to be studied with care and patience. The study would be rewarding even purely as an

academic exercise. Some of the issues raised in the work, if sifted properly, may be found pertinent to one who cares to go into the roots of things, legal, economic, political and social. It is a different matter that on account of alien invasions (not entirely political) the ideas and ideals got buried under different sets of ideas and ideals or that, on account of changed educational policies, the newer generations were not required to get acquainted with the contents of this work. The fact that the work was neglected or forgotten may not justify the view, held by many, that it deserves to be forgotten and ignored.

The study is not only academically rewarding, it is equally interesting to one who is deeply concerned with the issues imbedded in contemporary social, political and legal problems.

There have been several attempts at ordering the basic problems of politics and the notion of 'order' itself has had several approaches. To my mind the notion of equality is fundamental in a significant manner. I confess that as a concept it is not clear but the lack of clarity comes to the surface only on closer examination. Yet, notions like equality of law, or equal regard to all and equal freedom of speech have figured in ancient European political thought. Likewise, the notion of hierarchy is equally ancient. Some thought that 'social justice' should mean the preservation of hierarchy while others thought that it should mean the demolition of hierarchy. Those who favoured a hierarchical society or stratification must accord equality to the members belonging to a particular stratum and those who favour a classless society must bestow more privileges on those who cooperate with them and less on those who go against them. The tension is in a way insurmountable.

Manu's philosophy of man and society must be viewed in the context of this tension between equality and hierarchy, equality of some sort among the members of a particular *varṇa* even for the purpose of recognising that they belong to the same *varṇa* and hierarchy among the *varṇas*. Man in Manu's scheme is a term devoid of either sense or reference. We come across men belonging to different geographical regions and men endowed with certain inborn qualities. They are the 'brute facts' to begin with. In order to acquire or realise certain 'human qualities', these men and women must pass through certain well-defined stages or

*āśramas*. We, therefore, do not meet a man unless we are thinking of an animal having a certain form, shape and size. Such an animal would not be considered 'a human being'. To seek to define man as though he is an object of nature having nothing to do with race or stock, sex or age, or education, custom, tradition or milieu, according to Manu, is to define a non-existent creature. The notion of 'natural, inalienable and sacred rights', a phrase popularised by the Declaration of Rights in 1789, would thus be vacuous for Manu.

But Manu does not explain why a *Brāhmaṇa* should be treated as a *Brāhmaṇa* as soon as he is born (I. 99; XI. 85) or a *Kṣatriya* does not deserve to be treated as an ordinary mortal even when he is a mere boy (VII. 8). Moreover, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Kṣatriyas* having such exalted descent (*Brāhmaṇa* from the mouth and *Kṣatriya* from the arms of Brahmā) and who acquire *dvijahood* in time should at all have a fall. Whence come greed, lust and selfishness, lazinesss and forgetfulness, to lead to their fall ? The source of *kāma* and *saṁkalpa* (II. 2 and 3) remain unexplained. In Manu's scheme there is no discontinuity between man and lower animals. A man's station in life and 'destiny' are determined by a host of factors like his *varṇa*, sex, place of birth, *āśrama* and finally his actions or *karma*. Could some of these factors be treated as adventitious and some others as essential? We do not come across a satisfactory answer. If we could find an answer, we might work out the 'minimum content' of 'manhood' in that case.

Why must the different *varṇas*, with their divisions and subdivisions, live together? The contract to live together is imbedded in the wider and broader notion of *dharma*. They need to live together because *dharma*, which is revealed, ordains such an order, because the rights and obligations will remain unscathed if they live together and guide their lives, individual as well as social, according to *dharma*. The notion of *dharma* with all its opacity holds the key to the understanding of Manu's scheme.

## APPENDIX

## 'SOCIAL CONTRACT' IN MANUSMṚTI

Most European thinkers interested in the deeper issues of political theory have at one stage or another sought to explore the nature of man. In the course of their investigations they have dug deep into the ontological and epistemological problems even if they do not appear to be immediately relevant. They thought that political issues could neither be understood nor explained unless certain profounder issues were examined and unravelled. In fact, reading Plato and Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas, Hobbes and Hume, or Kant and Hegel, for that matter, it becomes difficult to ascertain whether their original interest lay in ontology and epistemology or in political, legal and moral problems. There were, no doubt, another class of thinkers, like Machiavelli, Montesquieu and Burke, to name a few, who did not care to raise or examine the philosophical views in the same manner. In our times Robert Nozick, to my mind, is the only major figure who has felt the need of enunciating his 'philosophical' views. In this country Sri Aurobindo is perhaps the only thinker who has endeavoured to work out philosophical views which support his social and political theories.

The notion of 'Social Contract,' which stems from the debates initiated by the Sophists, is intimately associated with the concept of man. How should we view 'man,' his nature and destiny ? Where does he reveal himself distinctly? I would, in this connection, refer to four sets of polarized thinking. These sets are not, let me hasten to add, neatly separable; in fact, they have influenced each other in many ways.

In the first place, there is the nature-convention polarity. How much of man's behaviour is intelligible or explicable in terms of 'nature' (and her laws) and how much of it in terms of 'convention'? Are the laws which govern human relationships gifts of nature or are they creations of man, his predispositions, feelings and aspirations? According to the major Greek thinkers who eventually came to influence the course of European thought, 'man' is seen as distinct from other animals by virtue of his 'natural' possession of certain abilities like the ability to argue and make meaningful utterances. Man's 'reason' is his most

precious and original possession; man reveals himself in *knowing* and in overcoming his ignorance. Contrary to this view, it is held by many that 'good' and 'bad' are not 'natural' distinctions; they are not necessary and so they are adventitious.

The second polarity centres round the question: Is 'man' basically a 'knowing being' or is he primarily an agent? One view is that the world around us is there to be understood and interpreted. The other view is that the world is waiting to be changed. Man reveals himself in his efforts to change the world and his understanding is at best an instrument. Heroes and not sages are the persons to be remembered and admired.

The third polarity centres round the question: Is man essentially a lonely creature? According to one view 'man' should view himself as a member of a larger body which includes his ancestors, his contemporaries and his unborn successors. The individual is not a 'private' being; he has a 'public' life which, by all accounts, is of greater consequence. He is accountable to others. Beyond his 'political' or 'public' life, there can be no area of personal ethical life of man. The rival point of view stresses his loneliness, his privacy, his freedom to choose alternatives and, in extreme cases, his personal salvation. Man realises himself when he devotes himself in a single-minded manner to his transcendental self. Inward convictions based on one's conscience should gain ascendancy over conformity to the opinions held by peers. Beyond political life the individual could still aspire to maintain his personal ethical life.

Finally, there is another polarity around the question: Is man by nature good or is he selfish and depraved? This debate dominated the Chinese political thought almost endlessly. According to one view man's nature is good or man is naturally undefiled and pure. This point, let me add here, has received various interpretations. The other point of view holds that man's nature is evil; he possesses the passion for what the Chinese call 'profit'; envy, hatred and lust determine man's thoughts and feelings.

Where do we place Manu? Manu's views, to be sure, are not as clear and unambiguous as one wishes them to be. Consensus and consent go rather easily with the view which emphasises that man is essentially an 'agent'; conventions rule the

society and human behaviour. When, however, man is seen as a 'cognitive being' one can at best talk of 'agreement'; if 'nature' is believed to govern human behaviour then consensus and consent could hardly figure in any meaningful discourse because consent assumes voluntary choice. Finally, if the individual is accountable to himself or his conscience then consent would amount to 'rendering unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's'.

I have already referred to the inconsistencies Manu is not one of those who believe that man is essentially or naturally good. Left to themselves, men would bring about disorder and chaos. Hence the need of 'punishment' and 'monarch.' Order is to be imposed from above. But Manu also believes that man occupies two different worlds, one as a social animal and the other as a spiritual being.

The only occasion when Manu specifically refers to a 'compact' is when he recommends a close cooperation between the *Brahmins* and the *Kṣatriyas* (IX. 322); otherwise the notion of a 'compact' is absent. When *dharma* is supreme, the notion of 'compact' is redundant.

INDRA DEVA AND SRIRAMĀ

# THE ARTICULATION OF JURIDICAL CONCEPTS IN LATER *SMṚTIS*

The *Nārada*, *Bṛhaspati* and *Kātyāyana Smṛtis* constitute the grand trio of traditional Indian jurisprudence and procedure, and represent the last and the most sophisticated stage of their development in *Smṛti* literature. They are of a comparatively later origin and may, therefore, provide better clues to some of the customary norms which have come down to us. An analysis of their content can be legitimately expected to shed some interesting light on a period of India's cultural history about which our knowledge is seriously limited. It may illuminate many intricate aspects of the traditional normative patterns which have held their sway for so many centuries.

The present study seeks to give a broad idea of the juridical concepts contained in the *Smṛtis* attributed to Nārada, Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana. Before dealing with some of the concepts related with the judicial system, let us briefly introduce these three major texts of the traditional Indian jurisprudence.

*Nāradasmṛti*

Like other mythical seers to whom the authorship of various *Smṛtis* is ascribed, the name 'Nārada' is also taken from Vedic literature. This name occurs in the *Atharvaveda Saṁhitā*, in the *Vaṁśa* or *Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa* and in the second part of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*. Manu refers to Nārada as one of the ten primeval sages. The *Mahābhārata* presents him as a sage, who stirs up feuds.

The text of the *Nāradasmṛti* has come down to us almost intact. Among the *Smṛtis*, the texts of which have come down to us intact, *Nāradasmṛti* is perhaps the last. The text is found in a larger and a smaller version, both of which have been edited by Dr. Jolly.

Apart from the text of the *Nāradasmṛti*, Asahāya's commentary on it entitled the *Nāradabhāṣya* is accorded a very high place in the discussions of law. An edition of the *Nāradīya Manu-Saṁhitā* with the *Bhāṣya* of Bhavasvāmin was published by K. Sāmbaśiva Śāstri. This name has been given to the work following the mythical preface which describes the *Nāradasmṛti* as an abridgement of the original work of Manu. But this mythical relationship between the two *Smṛtis* only implies the recognition of the authority of Manu. Though the *Nāradasmṛti* is based on Manu and Yājñavalkya, there is still some difference between them. The *Nāradasmṛti* gives us purely legal dicta. It does not prescribe the code of conduct and rules of atonement. It exhibits a sophisticated legal temper.

The classifications and distinctions propounded by the *Nārada-smṛti* are far more elaborate than those found in the *Manusmṛti*. The treatment of legal procedure shows a distinct advance over the norms laid down by Manu. On many matters the basic idea seems to be the same as that found in the *Manusmṛti* but it has been worked out in more meticulous detail. One example of the legalistic approach found in this *Smṛti* is its emphasis on documentary evidence and records. It shows far less faith in oral evidence and verbal procedure. The royal edict has been considered to be supreme by Nārada. The royal edict can overrule even the *Smṛti* dicta.

Keith thinks that the *Nāradasmṛti* was composed in the fourth century A.D. under the earlier Gupta emperors during the classical era. Jolly places the *Nāradasmṛti* in the fourth or fifth century A.D. He argues that Nārada has mentioned the *Dināra* (denarius of Romans) and there exists a similarity of legal procedure between the drama *Mṛcchakaṭika* (sixth century A.D.) and the *Nāradasmṛti*. Kane does not agree with this view. He quotes Keith to the effect that in the first century A.D., Indo-Scythian coins equal in weight to *Dināra* were prevalent in India. According to Kane, *Nāradasmṛti* was composed between 100 A.D. and 300 A.D.

Among these opinions about the date of *Nāradasmṛti*, the opinion of Keith seems to us to be the most consistent with the rules and provisions of Nārada. Nārada provides for certain rules which were rejected by earlier law-givers. Many of these

rules themselves indicate that they were composed in an established empire with a strong emperor who did not have much faith in traditional texts.

Nārada provides that ordinances proclaimed by a king can overrule even the dicta of the *Smṛtis*. He considers gambling a lawful amusement provided it is carried on in approved gambling houses under state supervision. Gambling was taken to be a legitimate source of revenue. Nārada also indicates clearly the supremacy of usage over the *Smṛti* rules. The elaborate rules of debt, deposits, partnership, etc., indicate a highly developed commercial society. Such conditions prevailed under early Gupta emperors. Nārada is more liberal and mundane than Manu and Yājñavalkya. For instance, he allowes a *Śūdra* wife; the practice of *niyoga*; remarriage of widow; and physical examination of the bride-groom (for potency) before marriage. He has given the right to the patriarch to distribute property among his sons. Widows and adopted sons are not recognized as heirs.

The larger and more authoritative version of the *Nāradasmṛti* deals, after a short preface, with the creation of the world, with legal procedure, plaint and courts of justice. After this, rules regarding the eighteen titles of law are laid down meticulously. The eighteen titles are: (*i*) Debt, (*ii*) Deposits, (*iii*) Partnership, (*iv*) Resumption of gift, (*v*) Breach of contract of service, (*vi*) Non-payment of wages, (*vii*) Sales effected by a person other than the rightful owner, (*viii*) Non-delivery of sold goods, (*ix*) Rescission of purchase, (*x*) Transgression of a compact, (*xi*) Boundary dispute, (*xii*) Matrimonial disputes, (*xiii*) Inheritance, (*xiv*) Theft and other criminal offences, (*xv*) Abuse, (*xvi*) Assault, (*xvii*) Gambling, and (*xviii*) Miscellaneous. Among these, the first, that is debt, has been discussed in the *Nāradasmṛti* most elaborately. In the treatment of this title not only rules relating to issues directly connected with debt have been included but a good deal of attention has been given to the more general aspects of law such as those concerning documents, witnesses, evidence, and proofs by various kinds of ordeals.

Besides the larger version of the text of Nārada, the fifteenth-century Nepalese palm-leaf manuscript discovered by Bendall is immensely important. It added a whole new chapter (on Theft) to the text existing by that time. That the palm-leaf manuscript is

authentic is shown by the fact that numerous references to the *Nāradasmṛti* mentioned in medieval digests and commentaries, are found in it. The chapter on Theft has been included by Jolly as an appendix in his edition.

*Bṛhaspatismṛti*

Like all metrical codes, the *Bṛhaspatismṛti* has also taken its name from a famous Vedic seer, Bṛhaspati. The text of Bṛhaspati has survived only as quotations in digests and commentaries. Dr. Führer collected eighty-four verses from various commentaries. Dr Jolly collected seven hundred eleven verses of Bṛhaspati. The verses deal with law and judicial procedure. Jolly translated these verses into English in the Sacred Books of the East (Vol. 33). Later, M. K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar brought out a sizeable volume of the reconstructed text of the *Bṛhaspatismṛti*. He has collected not only verses and passages dealing with law but also those that concern subjects such as *prāyaścitta* and *ācāra*. P. V. Kane, however, holds that the verses on *prāyaścitta* and *ācāra* belong to a different, independent and comparatively later work, though he admits that Viśvarūpa considered the verses on *vyavahāra* and *prāyaścitta*, which he quoted from Bṛhaspati, to belong to one and the same work.

The code of Bṛhaspati is in many ways similar to that of Manu, Yājñavalkya and Nārada. However, there are some significant differences also. On the whole, the *Bṛhaspatismṛti* shows fewer deviations from the rules laid down by Manu than the *Nāradasmṛti*. While Nārada shows a tendency to go beyond and advance on the dicta of Manu, Bṛhaspati shows greater inclination of adherence to these on many matters. Bṛhaspati has borrowed copiously from the code of Manu. Sometimes he has expanded and elaborated Manu's dicta in such a way that he begins to give the impression of being his commentator. However, Bṛhaspati's conformity to Manu is by no means complete. Following Manu, he condemns the practice of *niyoga* and does not recognise *kṣetraja* and other sons. Only an *aurasa* son and the son of an appointed daughter are heirs of the father's property; others get only a subsistence. Bṛhaspati, like Yājñavalkya, gives equal rights to father and son in ancestral property. Bṛhaspati deals elaborately

with judicial procedure and litigation like Nārada. He also allows gambling in public places.

Jolly puts the date of composition of the *Bṛhaspatismṛti* around the sixth or seventh century A.D. Kane does not agree with Jolly's view. He argues that the authority ascribed to Bṛhaspati by Kātyāyana and various commentators such as Viśvarūpa, Medhātithi and Aparārka cannot be attained before a number of centuries had passed in between. Kane concludes that the *Bṛhaspatismṛti* was composed some time between 200 and 400 A.D. Rangaswami Aiyangar thinks that the *Bṛhaspatismṛti* is a much earlier work, earlier than the works of Yājñavalkya and Nārada. He points out the similarities between the codes of Manu and Bṛhaspati and declares the *Bṛhaspatismṛti* to be a work composed in the second century B.C.

The dicta of Bṛhaspati related to law are the following: plaints; human and divine evidence; witnesses; documents; possession; eighteen titles of law and Prakīrṇaka. The eighteen titles of law are: (*i*) Interest, (*ii*) Deposit, (*iii*) Debt, (*iv*) Partnership, (*v*) Wages, (*vi*) Breach of contract of service, (*vii*) Land disputes, (*viii*) Sale by a non-owner, (ix) Going back on a deal of a sale or purchase, (*x*) Breach of contract, (*xi*) Matrimonial disputes, (*xii*) Theft, (*xiii*) Inheritance, (*xiv*) Gambling, (*xv*) Abuse, (*xvi*) Assault, (*xvii*) Murder and other criminal offences, (*xviii*) Abduction of another's wife.

Bṛhaspati was perhaps the first law-giver to distinguish between civil and criminal suits.

He declares that the first group of fourteen titles sprang from wealth and the other group of four from injury. Bṛhaspati recognizes a widow, daughter, and mother as heirs. He condemns arbitrariness in dispensation of justice. Emphasizing the importance of evidence and procedure, he points out that right decision cannot be made merely on the basis of *Śāstras*, but the evidence and arguments must be examined in each case, otherwise innocents are likely to be punished. In many of these views Bṛhaspati comes very close to modern legal norms.

### *Kātyāyanasmṛti*

The *Smṛti* ascribed to Kātyāyana presents the legal procedure in a very mature form. Kātyāyana is a *Sūtrakāra* of a *Śrautasūtra* of the *Śukla Yajurveda*. The present *Smṛti* has obviously

borrowed the name of the *Sūtrakāra*. The *Kātyāyanasmṛti* has not come to us intact. P. V. Kane has brought out an excellent reconstruction of this *Smṛti* on the basis of the quotations found in commentaries and digests. This reconstructed version, *Kātyāyanasmṛtisāroddhāraḥ* contains 975 verses on *Vyavahāra*. Kane, however, thinks with a good deal of justification that the complete work of Kātyāyana must have been much larger.

Kātyāyana has inherited the terms and style of Nārada and Bṛhaspati. On the basis of the high degree of refinement and elaboration of juristic procedure reached in Kātyāyana, Kane places this work later in point of time to both Bṛhaspati and Nārada. While the posteriority of Kātyāyana to Bṛhaspati is taken for granted by many, Rangaswami Aiyangar does not think that the *Kātyāyanasmṛti* is necessarily of a later origin than Nārada. His chief argument is that Kātyāyana refers to Bṛhaspati specifically while he makes no mention of Nārada. Kātyāyana seems to be aware of a good many features of his work such as his division of eighteen titles of law into *Dhanamūla* and *Hiṁsāmūla*, his discussion about decisions, three kinds of documents, debts, and several kinds of interest. But despite the fact that Kātyāyana does not mention Nārada expressly, Kane concludes on the basis of good evidence that he was certainly aware of the work of Nārada and elaborated it in many ways. Kātyāyana elaborates Nārada's idea of the four feet of *Vyavahāra*; and he explains at length the terms *bhṛtin* and *pratyupakārataḥ* mentioned by Nārada in the context of seven kinds of gifts. He adopts the classifications and terms of Nārada in a similar order; for instance, the order of fines for five kinds of *hīnavādins*. Kane thinks that the strong impact of this work on commentaries and digests indicates a passage of many centuries. Thus, the *Smṛti* of Kātyāyana is placed between A.D. 300 and A.D. 600.

Kātyāyana's prominent feature is his elaborate treatment of *Strīdhana*. He classifies and defines it and gives absolute right of its disposal to women. He is the first *Smṛti*-writer to deal with *Strīdhana* eleborately.

Kātyāyana frequently refers to Bhṛgu's views. According to Kullūka, by the name Bhṛgu, Kātyāyana quotes the verses of *Manusmṛti* in Bhṛgu's version. But many of the views which are ascribed to Bhṛgu by Kātyāyana are not found in the extant

the version of *Manusmṛti*. It is possible that since that time the text of *Manusmṛti* has been changed largely or there could be some other *Smṛti* of Bhṛgu which has been lost in course of time or it is probable that the proper reading is 'Guruḥ' instead of 'Bhṛgu'. 'Guruḥ' has been used as another name of Bṛhaspati.

Kātyāyana is referred to by Vijñāneśvara, Aparārka, and others as a *Smṛtikāra* of equal authority with Yājñavalkya, Bṛhaspati and Nārada. In fact in many matters he shows more refinement and elaboration than even Nārada and Bṛhaspati. He shows great skill and inclination for bringing out subtle distinctions and providing definitions. For instance, while all other writers employ the term *jayapatra* for all judgements whether delivered after a contest or *ex parte*, Kātyāyana distinguishes between *jayapatra* and *paścātkāra*. He applies the term *paścātkāra* to a judgement delivered after legal proceedings consisting of arguments and a contest between the parties; that is, after all the four stages of judicial proceedings have been gone through. If the decree is *ex parte* or based on admission, or if the other party is not suitable for being a *hīnavādin*, then according to Kātyāyana the judgement delivered is not to be termed *paścātkāra* but what is given is a *jayapatra*.

Many similar instances where Kātyāyana seems to have introduced further sophistication in legal concepts are available. For example, in his deliberation on *dāyabhāga* or division of joint family property, he makes a distinction between *kanyāgata* and *vaivāhika*. Similarly, he defines separately wealth obtained by *śaurya* and *dhvajāhṛta*, while Nārada and Bṛhaspati include both under *śauryadhana*. His treatment of *vidyādhana** is more elabo-

*The property of the members of an undivided family was classed into two distinct groups: (1) owned as part of a common pool; (2) owned as personal property. There were complex rules for formulating these groups. Property described as *kanyāgata*, *vaivāhika*, *śaurya*, *dhvajāhṛta*, and *vidyādhana* belonged to the second group. When property was to be divided among various members of an undivided family, the second group was exempt from division.

*kanyāgata:* when a young girl was gifted to an individual, outside of marriage, other gifts which accompanied the gift of the girl have been called *kanyāgata* by Kātyāyana.

*vaivāhika:* dowry received at marriage.

*śaurya:* wealth acquired as reward for extraordinary valour.

rate than that found in other *Smṛtis*. Kātyāyana classifies sureties into five types, while Yājñavalkya and Bṛhaspati mention only four and Nārada only three kinds of sureties. In certain other matters also he shows remarkable refinement. He does not allow absolute onwership to the king over all the land.

### *Concepts Related to the Judicial Process*

It is in the *Smṛtis* that the concepts related to judicial procedures assume a crystallised form. The *Manusmṛti* introduced them, and in the *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* they are presented in a concise and systematic manner. The *Smṛtis* of Nārada, Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana carry this tradition to greater heights of sophistication and refinement.

Manu, Yājñavalkya and Nārada have termed the law suits as *Vyavahāra*. Kātyāyana defines the term in two senses, conventional and etymological. The dispute in a law court between plaintiff and defendant which springs from what is desired to be proved is referred to as *Vyavahāra*.

In the etymological definition, however, the stress is on the removing of doubt. The *upasarga vi* has been employed in the sense of 'various', *ava* stands for doubt, and *hāra* means 'removing'. Therefore, *Vyavahāra* is so called because it removes

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*dhvajāhṛta*: wealth looted by a soldier from a defeated army which has taken to flight.

*vidyādhana*: wealth earned through specially acquired knowledge or skill. Kātyāyana gives a fairly long list of the ways in which *vidyādhana* could be acquired. Here are some: 1. Gifts from disciples. 2. Payments from disciples. 3. Gifts received after making a claim to learning. 4. Money won in a bet involving a matter of specialised knowledge or skill.

*Vidyādhana* was exempt from the common pool only provided that: 1. The expense for acquiring *vidyā* did not come from the common pool and 2. *Vidyā* was not acquired as family heritage from a member of the family, even though the expense for acquiring it came from outside the common pool.

[This is a note added by the editor for clarification to satisfy the reader's curiosity. It is based on the *Dharmakośa*, the great compendium on various aspects of the large concept of *dharma*, compiled in the manner of a history of ideas under the editorship of Lakṣmaṇa Śāstrī Joshi and published from Wai, Maharashtra. Forreferences to Kātyāyana, made use of here, see the *Vyavahārakāṇḍa* of the *Dharmakośa*, Vol. I, Part II, pp. 1224-1228.].

the various doubts.[1] The titles of law are termed as *Vyavahāra-pada.*

Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana state that law-suits originate in disputes over wealth or injuries.[2] The distinction is quite close to civil and criminal litigation. Nārada points out the sentiments at the root of the suits: carnal desire, wrath, and greed.[3]

Kauṭilya, Yājñavalkya, Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Kātyāyana call *Vyavahāra* as *catuṣpāda* or quadruped. Yājñavalkya and Bṛhaspati specify the four feet as: the plaint, the reply, the proof, and the decision. Kātyāyana deletes decision and adds *Pratyākalita* or deliberation as burden of proof and puts it before proof. Kauṭilya and Nārada describe the four feet of law-suits as *Dharma, Vyavahāra, Caritra* (or usages of a country or family), and *Rājaśāsana* or royal command. The four feet described by Nārada are really the four feet of *Nirṇaya* or final decision as Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana maintain. They say that in a doubtful matter a decision can be reached by *Dharma, Vyavahāra, Caritra* and *Rājaśāsana.*[4]

Through right decision, *Dharma* is achieved. Nārada says that *Dharma* is the *Satya* or truth. Kātyāyana and Bṛhaspati explain it more clearly; when a guilty person confesses his guilt and the owner secures his wealth, the decision is by *Dharma.* A decision arrived at by ordeals is also said to be one by *Dharma.* In that case, proof, usage or royal edict is not necessary.

The *Vyavahāra* or decision by judicial proof is one where the judge and the assessors put forward some principles of the *Dharmaśāstra* while deciding the cases. That is why Nārada says that decision by *Vyavahāra* depends upon witnesses, as they are the principal instrument of proof. This implicitly includes other forms of proof such as document, possession, etc.[5] Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana further say that when a law suit is tried by this method and not by ordeals, then *Dharma* is overruled by *Vyavahāra. Caritra* means usages of the country. Bṛhaspati explains it in two ways. One refers to what is decided by inference. The other refers to the current usage of the country. Nārada says that only those usages which have been recorded in the royal court constitute *Caritra.* The *Caritra* decides everything and overrules the sacred law. Asahāya on the *Nāradasmṛti* comments: 'Immemorial usages of every country handed down from gener-

ation to generation can never be overruled on the strength of the *Śāstras*.'[6] Kātyāyana also emphasizes that whatever is in practice, whether or not it is in accordance with *Dharma*, is *Caritra*.

Nārada says that each succeeding one is stronger than the preceding one. When the decision has been given in accordance with usages, then *Vyavahāra* is overruled by *Caritra*. For example, according to Bṛhaspati, marrying one's maternal uncle's daughter is in practice in the South among *Brāhmaṇas* while in other parts of the country it is condemned by law. Similarly, adultery is an offence, but Aparārka mentions that adultery with an Ābhīra woman is not to be regarded so, if the royal edict records it as an established usage. Here too *Caritra* overrules the ordinary *Vyavahāra*.[7] Kātyāyana says that when certain usages are adjudged as opposed to the sacred law, or are likely to arouse discontent and commotion among people, the king's command overrules such usages.[8] But Bṛhaspati advises the king normally to honour usages in order to avoid the anger of subjects; for that may lead to the revolt of the army and depletion of the treasury.[9] Kātyāyana holds that each succeeding one out of *Dharma*, *Vyavahāra*, *Caritra* and royal edict overrules each preceding one; otherwise the *Dharma* would be destroyed.[10]

The *Smṛti* texts lay down that the monarch, assisted by learned *Brāhmaṇas*, should carefully administer justice in order to strengthen the stability of society. Manu and Nārada call the court of justice as *Dharmāsana*.[11] Kātyāyana calls it *Dharmādhikaraṇa*.

Bṛhaspati describes four kinds of *Sabhā* or courts; *Pratiṣṭhitā* or established in a place; *Apratiṣṭhitā* or moving from place to place; *Mudritā* or the court in which the chief judge is an appointee of the king and has the royal seal; and *Śāsitā* or the court headed by the king himself.[12]

The *Manusmṛti* prescribes that the king should come in the court without ostentation in his dress and ornaments.[13] He should dispense justice with the help of the judges, ministers, learned *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Purohita*, and *Sabhyas*:[14] Nārada also lays down that the king should take into account the views of his chief justice as well as the rules of the *Dharmaśāstras* while trying law-suits.[15] In certain matters, where texts are not available, the customs of the country should be depended upon. But in any case the king

should not take the responsibility of deciding suits on himself alone.

Though the king has been assigned the most important function in the dispensation of justice, he should depend upon a competent judge, according to Manu, Yājñavalkya and Kātyāyana.[16] The judge is called a *Dharmapravaktṛ* in the *Manusmṛti*. Nārada, Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana adopt the ancient term found in *Gautama Dharmasūtra*, *Prāḍvivāka* for the judge. These law-givers have also given the derivation of this word. It is a compound of two words, *prāḍ* (from the root *pracch* to ask) and *vivāka* (from the root *vāc* with *vi*). This means that one who asks questions with reference to the matter in dispute and brings out the truth, is a *Prāḍvivāka*. Nārada says that the judge should be like a good surgeon. Just as the surgeon extracts a dart by means of surgical instruments, similarly the chief judge must extract the dart of injustice out of a dispute by means of investigation.[17]

Apart from the chief judge, there should be some *Sabhyas* or assessors in the court of justice. These should be at least three according to Manu, Yājñavalkya and Nārada.[18]

Bṛhaspati suggests that the number of *Sabhyas* may be seven, five or three.[19] Like the chief judge, these *Sabhyas* should be learned Brāhmaṇas; when Brāhmaṇas are not available, the king may employ Kṣatriyas or Vāiśyas if they are proficient in the Vedas, but not Śūdras. According to Nārada the *Sabhyas* should be honourable men of tried integrity who are competent to discharge the duties, who can bear the burden of the administration of justice like good bulls. They should be acquainted with sacred law and rules of prudence, and be noble, veracious, and impartial.[20] Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana also make similar statements. The *Sabhyas* should be incorruptible, diligent, best among Brāhmaṇas, who are not avaricious, who are wealthy, who know the sacred texts, and who are faithful, and proficient in all laws, and are free from anger.[21] Persons who are ignorant of the customs of the country, atheists, those forbidden by the *śāstra*, insane, hot-tempered, greedy, or distressed should not be appointed as *Sabhyas*.[22]

Kātyāyana holds that the authority to decide suits lies with judges and *Sabhyas*. Any decision by other persons, though they may be royal officers and even if their decision is by chance

according to the sacred law, should be treated as null and void because it is a decision without jurisdiction.[23]

The *Sabhyas* should not connive with the king if he is doing injustice, because they will share the sin along with the king. They should convey the right decision, based on sacred law. Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana, however, hold that if *Sabhyas* knowing the mind of the king say what is agreeable to the king, they incur no sin. According to Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana, in this way only the king will be responsible for guilt.[24] Manu and Nārada hold that those persons who are not bold enough to express fair opinion must not be allowed to enter a judicial assembly. The members of court who remain mute or say what is contrary to justice are great sinners and liars.[25]

The court should be held in the open. Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana provide that the chief judge and assessors should not hold a conversation in private while the case is undecided; if they do so they should be punished.[26] Bṛhaspati, Nārada, and Kātyāyana ordain that a *sabhya* who decides wrongly because of affection, ignorance, greed or infatuation, should be punished by the king and declared unworthy to be a *sabhya*. He is liable to pay double the fine paid by the defeated party.[27] According to Bṛhaspati, the *sabhyas* who give unjust decision and take bribes should be punished by banishment and forfeiture of all property.[28] Kātyāyana says that the loss caused to a party due to a fault of the *sabhyas* should be made good by them but the king should not disturb the decision.[29]

It appears that trade and commerce were well developed in the *Smṛti* era, and traders wielded considerable influence in the community. Kātyāyana lays down that some merchants should be included in the court. They should be such men from guilds who are of high families and character, well advanced in age, of good conduct, wealthy, and free from malice. These merchants are to be appointed to listen to the causes and to look to the administration of justice.[30]

Many other institutions for deciding disputes are also described in the *Smṛtis*. These institutions of private arbitration are quite close to the modern *pañcāyatas*. These are: *Kula*, *Śreṇī*, *Pūga*, and *Gaṇa*. These courts are mentioned in the ascending order of importance—each succeeding one being superior to the preceding

one.[31] *Kulas* are mentioned by Manu as officers who look after ten villages and enjoy one *Kula* or as much land as suffices for one family. *Kulas* are also explained as family gatherings, groups of agnatic and co-agnatic relatives[32] or village councils. Aparārka explains it as husbandmen.[33] *Śreṇī* is explained as corporations of traders or of artisans. According to Kātyāyana, *Śreṇī* refers to guilds of artisans or association of persons having same trade though they may belong to different castes; *Pūga* refers to assemblies of one village or city though of different castes and professions; and *Gaṇa* means groups of Brāhmaṇas.[34] Medhātithi explains *Gaṇa* as 'Builders of houses and mansions' or 'Brāhamaṇas dwelling in *Maṭhas*'.[35] *Vyavahāraprakāśa* says that *Gaṇa* and *Pūga* refer to the same assembly.[36] *Smṛticandrikā*, (quoting Bhṛgu), *Parāśara-Mādhavīya*, *Sarasvatīvilāsa* and *Vyavahāraprakāśa* enumerate ten tribunals: tribunals of foresters; of caravans; of army; of villages; of capital; *Gaṇa*; *Śreṇi*; *Kula*; *Kulika*; the judge appointed by the king; and king himself.[37] Kātyāyana quotes Bṛhaspati and says that these and other types of groups have been called by Bṛhaspati as *Vargas*.[38] Bṛhaspati says that *Kula*, *Śreṇī* and *Gaṇa*, which function in the king's knowledge, can decide the disputes, excepting criminal (*sāhasa*) law-suits. The criminal suits should be decided by the king. Bṛhaspati also says that the *Adhyakṣas* of *Kula*, *Śreṇī* and *Gaṇa* can decide disputes. Among these, *Kula* is the lowest court. What cannot be decided in *Kula* can be put before *Śreṇī*. The cases which are beyond the competence of *Śreṇī* should be decided by *Gaṇa*. Those cases which a *Gaṇa* cannot decide should be decided by the judge. The *sabhyas* have more authority than *Kula*, etc., and the *Adhyakṣa* or the chief justice is superior in powers even to them, but the king is the most powerful among them all, as he decides all categories of law-suits—higher, medium and inferior.

Among all these courts only the king has the authority of imposing fines and corporal punishments. Bṛhaspati says that discretion of the Lord is above the thinking of all other beings, for their thinking is retarded by the darkness of ignorance and doubt.

Disputes within a tribe, guild, or sect were not to be decided by the king. Kātyāyana explicitly says that the disputes of residents of the same country, or the same capital or the same hamlet of cowherds, and of the same town or village should be decided

by their own conventional usages. But when the disputes arise with others the decision must be in accordance with the sacred texts.[39] Bṛhaspati ordains thai the disputes of husbandmen, craftsmen such as carpenters, artisans such as painters, money-lenders' guilds, dancers, sects such as Pāśupatas and criminal tribes should be decided by their own conventions and usages.[40] The cases of the foresters should be tried in the forest, the soldiers should be tried in military courts, and *Sārthas* or the members of caravans and traders should be tried in their own courts.[41]

Nārada declares that every trial has four stages. In the first stage the facts of the dispute are received; in the second stage the title of law is ascertained; in the third the pleadings and evidence is examined; and only after these the decision is given.

Kātyāyana and Bṛhaspati explain the procedure of courts very graphically. The litigant should approach the king or judge in a court at a proper time. He should bow down before the king or judge. The king or judge should ask him: 'What is your business; What is the injury done to you; don't be afraid, speak out, man.' The judge should further ask, 'By whom, where, at what time and why was the injury caused?' Then whatever reply the litigant gives, that should be considered by the judge with the assessors and the Brāhmaṇas. They should see whether it can be entertained as a law-suit. If it is judicially admissible, then the judge should deliver the order under his seal to the plaintiff for calling the defendant or he should order the court's officer to summon the defendant.

Nārada, Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana lay down elaborate rules for the summoning of the defendant. When the defendant has been summoned he should come to the court and answer the plaintiff in person. Kātyāyana allows three exceptions to this general rule. First, the defendant can send a person as his deputy; secondly, the defendant may put forward another person as defendant; and, thirdly, the plaintiff may accept another person as the defendant. Thus, a person who is unconnected with the dispute and even a stranger may be allowed to have the right to defend if he is put forward by the defendant who is charged by the plaintiff.[42]

Certain persons have been exempted from appearing before the court in person. According to Kātyāyana persons engrossed in performing religious rites for securing heavenly rewards,

persons who are ill or idiots, who are not at ease owing to calamities, who are under the influence of intoxicants, and women, should be exempted from appearing in courts of law in person. A young woman whose house is dilapidated, a lady of good family, a woman who has recently delivered, a maiden who is of a higher caste than the claimant, are also exempted because these are declared to be under the tutelage of their kinsmen.[43] The lists of Nārada and Bṛhaspati are a bit different from Kātyāyana's list.

When it is apprehended that some time would elapse before the summons from the king can be served on the defendant, the plaintiff should keep the defendant under restraint by the king's order. This is called *Āsedha* or restraint. According to Nārada, if the defendant attempts to abscond when the case is about to be tried and does not take heed of the claimant's words, the plaintiff shall have the defendant restrained until legal summons have been served.[44]

Kātyāyana provides that when a litigant is shown to have seized the property in dispute he should hand it over to the other party,[45] if the latter is trustworthy, or it should be handed over to a third party. The third party is like a receiver for the successful party. This provision is similar to that of a modern receiver.

### *The Plaint*

Manu does not mention plaint or reply specifically. The plaint has been referred to as *Pūrvapakṣa* by Bṛhaspati, Nārada, and Kātyāyana. *Vādin* and *Prativādin* are terms used for plaintiff and defendant. At certain places *Arthin* (the person who needs the help of court) or *Abhiyoktṛ* (who attacks) are used for plaintiff and *Abhiyukta* (attacked) for defendant. Nārada says that the person who first approached the court with his complaint is the plaintiff. When both of the parties make a claim against each other, as in a partition suit, both can be in the positions of plaintiff and defendant. Kātyāyana says that a person cannot have the position of plaintiff merely by informing the court first, but whosoever has suffered greater loss of wealth should be given the position of the plaintiff.[46] Bṛhaspati ordains that when groups of persons go together claiming to be heard first, then the position of being heard first should be given according to the order

of castes or after looking to the gravity of the injury or loss to each.

Bṛhaspati declares four kinds of plaint: it can be founded on suspicion; founded on fact, regarding the recovery of a debt, or a fresh trial of a cause tried previously.[47]

The plaint should be free from defects, capable of proof, provided with good arguments, precise and reasonable, brief in words, rich in contents, unambiguous, not self-contradictory, devoid of opposite arguments, and capable of meeting opposite arguments.[48]

The scribe should write down exactly what the plaintiff or the defendant narrates; if he writes differently he should be punished by a just king.[49] He should write down on a wooden board or some other material, with the word 'yes' whatever the plaintiff speaks before the court.[50]

Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana state that the plaintiff must be given a certain period of time to amend his plaint. This time can be adjusted according to his need. He may take three days or seven days to collect his wits.[51]

*Defects of Plaint*

The *Smṛti* writers enumerate many defects of a plaint. These defects belong to several categories. Some plaints are inadmissible because their contents are contradictory to the prevailing principles of law, some others because they are ambiguous, still others because they do not specifically provide the necessary facts on the basis of which the genuineness of the complaint can be ascertained, and lastly, there are plaints which fail to bring out the exact nature of injury or grievance. Bṛhaspati, Nārada, and Kātyāyana say that a plaint is defective when it is opposed to the interests or usage of the country, or is prohibited by the king or contains a mixture of many titles of law.[52] Kātyāyana further states that even if a plaint contains many causes of action mixed with each other a just king may accept it and investigate them separately. This statement by Kātyāyana may also mean that the cause of action may be the same but it may contain several different items requiring different reliefs. Such plaints are not necessarily bad.[53] A plaint is unacceptable when it lacks the mention of time and place of the cause of action, statement of

the material claimed,[54] or the amount, or if it does not state the dimensions of the thing claimed. Those plaints are not entertainable which are declared as vitiated such as the one which contains an unknown or imaginary grievance; which discloses no injury; which contains words making no coherent sense; which gives no cause for action; which is incapable of redressal and which is self-contradictory.[55] Bṛhaspati explains these elaborately. The term *aprasiddha* is applied to that grievance which was never asserted by anybody; *sadoṣa* is that plaint which is not related to the claim of the plaintiff but is concerned with other things. *Nirarthaka* is the one in which the injury is so slight that no man would complain about it, or which refers to a trifling sum, or which does not concern one of the titles of law relating to abuse, etc. The plaint is *asādhya* or unsusceptible of redress when the plaintiff says that the defendant is bound to give me a bow made of the horn of a hare. The plaint is *viruddha* or contrary to equity when the usages or interests of the town or kingdom are violated in a plaint.[56] Nārada too points out some defects of a plaint. These defects are somewhat similar to those described by Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana. He speaks of *anyārtha* or related to a different subject; *arthahīna* or meaningless; *pramāṇavarjita* or one in which the amount of the disputed item is not declared; *āgamavarjita* or what is against the sacred law; *hīna* or when the writing is deficient; *adhika* or redundant; and *bhraṣṭa* or when the plaint is damaged. Nārada explains these defects thoroughly. *Anyārtha* has been declared of three kinds; where it proceeds from a different person than the creditor; where the disputed item is not mentioned properly; and where the plaint has been addressed to a wrong person. Law suits between teacher and student, father and son, husband and wife, master and servant are prohibited by Bṛhaspati because they are considered to be undesirable.[57]

*Defence*

After the plaint has been tendered the reply should be given by the defendant which corresponds to the tenor of the plaint.[58] The defence is called *Uttara* or *Pratipakṣa.*

Rules of adjournment are of ancient origin. Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Kātyāyana also recommended an adjournment of one to seven days in certain cases. They provide that if the defendant

wants an adjournment through timidity, terror, or weak memory he should be granted that.[59] Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana provide that time should be granted according to the time of the transaction in dispute, the capacity of the parties, and the gravity or slightness of the cause. Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana lay down that the time can be of a day, a month, or a fortnight, or a season (two months), or a year, or even beyond that, according to his ability.[60]

According to Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Kātyāyana, a reply can be of four kinds: denial; confession or admission; special plea; one which is based on a plea of former judgement[61] or *res judicata.*

Nārada and Kātyāyana give four kinds of the reply which is of the form of denial: 'This (what is written in the plaint) is false', 'I don't know anything about the thing', 'I was not then present there (at the transaction mentioned in the plaint)'; and 'I was not born at the time (of the transaction in the plaint)'.[62]

In reply of admission the defendant accepts the plaint as true, according to Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana.[63] Kātyāyana further adds that when the statement of the plaintiff has not been denied by the defendant or he remains silent, the reply will be treated as an admission.[64]

When the defendant accepts the facts of the plaint as correct and puts up a plea, it is called a reply of special plea.

Kātyāyana quotes Bṛhaspati to the effect that by the reply of special plea, the plaint becomes weak or fails. Bṛhaspati quotes in the same context Manu for support. He says that Manu calls it *ādharya* or rendering the plaint futile.[65] For instance, when a plaintiff says the defendant has taken some money and the defendant replies either that he has returned it or that it was gifted to him; this is the reply of special plea, Nārada says that in this case the defendant is reduced to the position of a claimant, and it is incumbent on him to prove his assertion at the time of the judicial investigation.[66] According to Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana, when a person, though defeated in a former proceeding, again causes a plaint to be written and is answered with the words; 'You were formerly defeated', this is the plea of former judgment.[67] Kātyāyana states that a plea of former judgment could be established in three ways: citing the judges who had decided the former

cases; by witnesses who know the decision; and by means of a document, the written judgment in the former case.[68]

Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana point out the defects of reply elaborately. Kātyāyana's list of these defects is more comprehensive. It includes the following *aprasiddha* or ununderstandable; *viruddha* or self-contradictory; *atyalpa* or too incomplete; *atibhūri* or too wide; *sandigdha* or ambiguous; *asaṁbhava* or impossible; *avyakta* or not clear; *atidoṣavat* or full of the fault of exaggeration; *avyāpaka* or that which does not meet all the points of plaint thoroughly; *Vyastapada* that which interrupts the plaintiff in starting his plaint; *nigūḍhārtha* or mysterious; *ākula* or making no sense; *vyākhyāgamya* or that which cannot be understood without further exposition; *asāra* or absurd. Kātyāyana discusses these at length.[69]

### *Sandhi or Compromise*

Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana provide that the litigants cannot compromise their disputes privately without the order of the court. If they do so, each of them would have to pay a fine double of that imposed on a defeated party because they have cheated the court by depriving it of its fees. But when the king has been informed or if a matter is compromised with his permission there will be no fine. Bṛhaspati says that when the plaint and the answer have been produced before the court and the suit has commenced, the court can make a compromise between the two parties, just as two pieces of red-hot iron can be welded together.

### *Adducing Proof*

After the answer has been produced before the court, the court would call upon one of the parties to establish its claim according to the reply. In case of reply of special plea, the defendant admits the facts of the plaint and raises a special plea. In this way the plaint becomes the reply and the reply of the special plea becomes the claim. The defendant has to prove his assertion before the court. Thus the burden of proof is on the defendant. In the case of a denial, the burden of proof is on the plaintiff. He has to prove the contents of the plaint.[70]

The claim to be established is called *Sādhya* or *Kārya*, and the

means of proof by which the entire claim of the litigant is established is *Sādhana* or *Kriyā*.[71] Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Kātyāyana provide that at the third stage of the suit, the plaintiff should substantiate his claim by adducing evidence. Nārada provides that the plaintiff should write down the means of proof.[72]

*Means of Proof*

Yājñavalkya, Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Kātyāyana declare the means of proof twofold: human and divine. Human means of proof are documents, witnesses and possession; divine means of proof are ordeals.[73] When human means of proof are available, the plaintiff should not depend upon ordeals; if he does so, he becomes the losing party. In case one party puts forth human means of proof while the other puts forth divine, the king or judge should accept human means of proof.[74] If the human means of proof covers only a substantial part of the allegation but not all the allegations, then the human means of proof should be accepted and not the divine means of proof though they cover all the allegations.[75] The ordeals may be employed when the dispute is about *Sāhasa* or heinous offences, about physical injury, abuse, defamation, causes that spring from force or if an offence has been committed in a secret forest, at night, in the interior of a house, or denial of a deposit.[76] Kātyāyana further adds that even in these cases (heinous offences, etc.) the judge must also investigate by means of reasoning, marks, gestures, and outward manifestations such as sweat, etc., by voice, the eyes, and movements.[77]

Kātyāyana provides that in different kinds of cases different means of proof should be adopted. When there is any dispute about usages of a *Pūga* or association of traders, a *Śreṇī* or guild of artisans and of a *Gaṇa* or groups of Brāhmaṇas, the document is the only means of proof. Such cases cannot be proved through ordeals or witnesses.

Nārada presents an interesting evaluation of the relative utility of the three means of proof. He says that a document is always valid, witnesses may give valid evidence as long as they live, possession acquires legal validity through the lapse of a certain period.[78] Bṛhaspati presents the relative merits of various kinds of proof clearly. He says that evidence is superior to inference, a

document is superior to evidence, continuous possession of three generations is superior to all.[79]

*Document*

In the *Manusmṛti*, documents as a means of proof occur indirectly. It declares that a document that is got written by force is void. It does mention forgers of royal edicts.[80] In the *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* and *Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra* document is mentioned as the first means of proof.[81] Later *Smṛti* writers have given great importance to document as a means of proof. Nārada glorifies documents saying that the creator has created writing as an excellent eye so that the affairs of the whole world would take their proper course. He further adds that a document solves all doubts which may have arisen with regard to place, time, profit, matters, quantity, or stipulated period.[82] Bṛhaspati says that doubt arises even within six months; therefore, the creator created letters which can be recorded on *patra* or writing material.[83]

Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Kātyāyana declare that a document can never be annulled by evidence, because writing is superior to witnesses. The proof by writing can be refuted only by another document related to the same matter or by a document again made specially for the same matter and not by any other means of proof such as by witnesses or by ordeals. But the validity of a document diminishes by neglect when it is neither seen nor read by anyone.[84] The *Smṛticandrikā*, quoting Vyāsa, remarks that in case of confusion a document written by a scribe and attested by witnesses is superior to a document in the litigant's own hand; a royal document is superior to one written by a scribe.[85]

Nārada warns that there are some villainious wretches who resort to the forging of documentary evidence. He illustrates his statement that appearances may be false by saying that the firmament has the appearance of a flat surfaee and the fire-fly looks like fire, yet there is no surface to the sky, nor fire in the fire-fly.[86] Bṛhaspati also makes a similar statement. He says that clever forgers acquainted with place and time will make a writing similar to the original document.[87] Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana give an illustration in this connection. They say that just as the reflection of a thing in a mirror is seen as if it were something real, though it is non-existent, so cunning people fabricate copies of documents resem-

bling the genuine writing of persons.[88] Bṛhaspati further says that such writings should be examined carefully by means of internal evidence and legitimate titles because women, the suffering persons, and those not acquainted with the art of writing, are deceived by their own relatives, fabricating documents signed with their names.[89]

*Possession*

The *Smṛtis* declare two kinds of possession: *Āgama* or with title; *Anāgama* or without title. *Āgama* means origin of title or titles. Manu, Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Kātyāyana declare that where possession is evident but no title is perceived, there the title shall be proof of ownership but not possession.[90] Nārada declares that possession without a clear title does not make evidence of ownership. Possession is not sufficient to create proprietary right. Such possession is illegitimate. Nārada holds that if a person pleads for it he is like a thief and is punishable, though he may have possessed the property for hundreds of years.[91] Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana express a similar opinion. They hold that only by possession a man cannot get ownership of a property.

*Witnesses*

The importance of witnesses in settling disputes finds mention even in the most ancient texts. But in the later *Smṛtis* the rules regarding witnesses have been elaborated and amplified to an unprecedented degree. The qualifications of witnesses have been laid down, and various kinds of incompetent witnesses have been enumerated.

The juridical analysis and conceptualization in later *Smṛtis* brings forth a classification also of the witnesses. Nārada divides witnesses into two types; i. *Kṛta* or appointed by litigants, and ii. *Akṛta* or not appointed by litigants.[92] He further divides the first into five types and the second into six. Bṛhaspati also speaks of twelve types which are the same as those of Nārada. The first of these is the *likhita* or one who gets his name written on the document in his presence. Nārada says that his deposition retains validity even after a great lapse of time. He should write his name himself; if he can not write, he should cause it to be written by another. Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana deal with this type in detail.

They say that he is brought by the litigant himself and his name is placed on a document as witness.[93] The second among these is *smārita* or one who has been reminded. His deposition remains valid up to the eighth year. According to Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana, he is one who becomes a witness without being mentioned on a document. He, being shown a transaction, is constantly reminded of the transaction by the party so that the transaction may be effectively proved thereafter.[94] The third is a casual witness. The deposition of this witness remains valid upto the fifth year, according to Nārada, Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana. They say that he is one who comes by chance at the time of transaction. The fourth type of witness is secret and his deposition remains valid upto the third year, according to Nārada. According to Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana, he is one who is made to listen to the speech of the defendant while remaining concealed behind a wall or a screen. The fifth and the last type of *Kṛta* witness is indirect. His deposition is declared valid upto one year by Nārada. Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana hold that an indirect witness is one who deposes as a witness because he has listened to somebody who has seen that incident and has gone to a distant country or is on his death-bed. After ordaining the specific period of validity of testimony, Nārada says that no definite period can be assigned for judging a witness, as law givers have declared that testimony depends upon memory. So a witness whose understanding, memory and hearing have never been impaired may give evidence even after a very considerable lapse of time.[95]

The defects of a witness should be pointed out by the opposite party before evidence begins. Kātyāyana says that the latent defects of the witnesses of a party should be pointed out by the opposite party.[96] The opponent should not be allowed to point out the defects of the witness after his evidence has started, according to Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana. After the matter has been narrated by a witness, if the opponent points out faults in the witness which he had not pointed out before and the opponent cannot give proper reasons for not proclaiming them earlier, he should be fined in the first amercement.[97] The defects may be pointed out by the opponent if they exist in the witness, but if he points out faults which do not exist in the witness, he deserves punishment equal to that of a false witness.[98] The faults

which are pointed out by the opponent must be cleared by the witness or his party, so that the litigant may not lose his claim.

Even in the early state of the growth of the legal system, law-givers recognized circumstantial evidence for ascertaining the truth in doubtful cases. The *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*[99] provides that doubtful cases should be decided either by a mark that leads to an inference or by a divine proof. The *Vaśiṣtha Dharmasūtra* puts it more clearly. Quoting some law-givers, he says that when a person is caught with weapons in his hands, with (stolen) goods in his possession, or covered with wounds, he is proved (to be a criminal).[100]

Kātyāyana introduces circumstantial evidence in the same words as the *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra* does. He interprets it as knowledge of a mark that leads to a certain inference.[101] Nārada speaks of six kinds of disputes in which witnesses are not required because the circumstantial evidence itself leads to a conclusion which dispenses with the evidence of the witnesses. These are the following: a person carrying a fire-brand in his hand near an accident of arson can be known as incendiary; the one taken with a weapon in his hand near the place of a murder, can be a murderer; when a man is found holding the wife of another man by her hair he must be an adulterer; a person who goes about with a hatchet in his hand found near a breached embankment may be recognized as a destroyer of bridges and embankments; one carrying an axe can be known as a destroyer of trees; and one whose looks are suspicious (such as one holding a blood-smeared sword) can be a person who has committed assault. Nārada says that in all these cases witnesses may be dispensed with. In the last mentioned case of assault, careful investigation is required because someone through hatred might make marks of injury upon his body in order to bring his enemy into trouble.[102] Kātyāyana ordains that when a party proves the charge against another of offering a bribe, affecting the means of recognition such as tampering with one's signature, holding out tempation to witnesses or *sabhyas*, or the concealment of wealth, in these cases the opponent (against whom such a charge has been established) loses his claim.[103]

Dangers of circumstantial testimony have been seen by ancient

law-givers. They prescribed great care in drawing inferences from circumstantial testimony.

*Oaths and Ordeals*

Taking oath is a very common method of proving oneself cleared from a sin. It is resorted to not only in judicial proceedings but also in everyday life to prove the purity of one's character. Nārada says that taking of oath even by gods and sages is on record. However, these law-givers show their keen intelligence and practical wisdom by relying on ordeals only as a last resort when no human proof or circumstantial evidence is available. Nārada, Kātyāyana, Bṛhaspati are all agreed on this point. Kātyāyana goes to the extent of prescribing that if one party to a case adduces human proofs and the other divine proofs, the king should accept the human proofs. He further says that if human proofs cover a matter partially and the divine proofs cover all allegations, even then human proofs should be relied upon.

The circumstances which are considered appropriate by Nārada for employing ordeals are such in which witnesses and documents are not usually available. Such rules seem to indicate that these *Smṛti* writers themselves were not very sure of the efficacy of proof through ordeals. Certain other ancient texts present forcefully the arguments against ordeals. These arguments resemble remarkably opinions which may be expressed on ordeals from a modern scientific point of view. For instance, Medhātithi commenting on Manu[104] mentions the view that fire and water are natural phenomena which behave in a uniform manner; these are not thinking beings to respond to appeals. It is further suggested that the function of ordeals may lie only in frightening people so that they may tell the truth. The ancient thinkers, however, do not accept such arguments in the last analysis. The cases in which ordeals might appear to have failed to give right decisions are explained by pointing to the undependability of human perception. The ground for faith in ordeals basically lies in the divine conception of the forces of nature and a profound belief in the moral order. What appear to be natural phenomena on the physical plane are believed to have divine essence. Deification of natural forces is not unknown to Hindu religion, nor is it unknown to other ancient religious traditions. Faith in the moral order, again

a common element in all religions, also provides justification for ordeals as it implies that good actions are bound to be rewarded and bad ones are bound to be punished. Belief in the law of *Karma* implies that it is only the wrong-doer who will suffer.

*Decision*

Nārada states that when a party is defeated due to confession of wrong conduct or after judicial investigation, the judge shall declare the defeat. The successful party shall receive a *jayapatra* couched in appropriate language.[105]

Bṛhaspati says that the *jayapatra* should contain an accurate record of the plaint; the reply; judicial investigation together with the signature of the judge and the royal seal.[106] A *jayapatra* was discovered in a village in Darbhanga about the ownership of a female slave or *Ceṭī* dated A.D. 1794.[107]

But Kātyāyana restricts the word *jayapatra* to a judgment given in cases of those whose claims are cast off for various reasons without a trial. He employs the word *paścātkāra* or refutation to a judgment given after a complete trial.[108]

Besides the conceptualization regarding the judicial procedures, the later *Smṛtis* also analyse and conceptualize various aspects of substantive law. There is an elaborate analysis of various issues involved in matters concerning inheritance, contract, and crime and a systematic analysis inveitably involves conceptualization.

It would be impossible to refer to the conceptualization on these matters even in a cursory manner in the short span of a paper.[109] It may be mentioned, however, that the later *Smṛtis* present a highly sophisticated analysis and conceptualization regarding the nature of inheritance, joint and separate property, *vidyādhana*, *strīdhana*, the types of heirs and sons, the inheritance of a sonless man, and so on.

Similarly, we find a high degree of refinement in the juridical conceptualization regarding contract in the later *Smṛtis*. Concepts have been developed and sharpened for dealing with various issues concerning persons incompetent to enter into valid transactions, debts, rates of interest, *ādhi* or pledge, surety, modes of recovery of debts, deposits, sale by one who is not the owner, partnership, resumption of gifts, non-payment of wages, breach of contract of service, the *karmakāras*, slaves, freedom from

slavery, transgression of compact or convention, rescission of purchase or sale, boundary disputes, etc.

In matters concerning crime also we find that the zenith of sophistication of the traditional Indian juridical thought was reached in the era of the later *Smṛtis*. This is shown by the elaborate treatment given to various kinds of crimes and the intricate provisions for dealing with them in the *Smṛtis* of Bṛhaspati, Nārada and Kātyāyana. These *Smṛtis* give detailed consideration to crimes against persons, including *vākpāruṣya* or abuse, *daṇḍapāruṣya* or assault, crimes relating to property such as *steya* or theft, *sāhasa* or crimes of violence, adultery, and so on.

The *Smṛtis* of Nārada, Bṛhaspati and Kātyāyana bear ample testimony to the high level of conceptual articulation attained by the Indian juridical tradition.

NOTES

1. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 25-26.
2. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, 1.3; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 30.
3. *Nāradasmṛti*, 1.25.
4. *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II.8; *Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, III.1.39-40.
5. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, IX. I. 11.6-7; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 36-38.
6. Asahāya on *Nāradasmṛti*, I.40.
7. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I.123; Aparārka on *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, III.7.
8. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 42.
9. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I.127.
10. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 43.
11. *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 23; *Nāradasmṛti*, I.34.
12. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I.57.
13. *Manusmṛti*, VIII.I
14. *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 2; *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II.1; *Kātyāyanasmṛti* 55-56.
15. *Nāradasmṛti*, I.35.
16. *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 9-10; *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II.3; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 63.
17. *Nāradasmṛti*, III.16.
18. *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 10-11; *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II. 3; *Nāradasmṛti*, III.4.
19. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I.68.
20. *Nāradasmṛti*, III. 4-5.
21. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 71; *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I.62.
22. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I.64.
23. *Kātyāyansmṛti*, I.100-101.
24. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I. 100-101.
25. *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 13; *Nāradasmṛti*, III. 10.
26. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I. 102; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 70.

27. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I. 103; *Nāradasmṛti*, III.67; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 79-83.
28. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I. 107.
29. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 81.
30. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 57-59.
31. *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II. 30; *Nāradasmṛti*, I.7; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 82.
32. Medhātithi on *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 2; *Vyavahāraprakāśa*, 29; *Mitākṣarā* on *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II. 30.
33. Aparārka on *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II. 30.
34. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 225.
35. Medhātithi on *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 2.
36. *Vyavahāraprakāśa*, 30.
37. In Russia, the rich farmers are called Kulaks. The word Kulaka seems to be the base of Kulak.
38. *Smṛticandrikā*, II. 18; *Parāśara Mādhavīya*, III. 24; *Sarasvatīvilāsa*, 67; *Vyavahāraprakāśa*, 8-9.
39. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 47.
40. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I. 74.
41. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I. 73.
42. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 89-90.
43. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 96-97.
44. *Nāradasmṛti*, I. 47.
45. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 120.
46. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 122-123.
47. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, II. 41.
48. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, II. 14-15; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 141-142.
49. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 132.
50. *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 181; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 129.
51. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, II. 39; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 133.
52. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, II. 13; *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 12; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 136.
53. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 137.
54. *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 11; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 138.
55. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, II. 8; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 140.
56. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, II. 9-15.
57. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, I. 124.
58. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, III. 1; *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 2; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 143.
59. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, III. 3; *Nāradasmṛti*, I. 44; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 145.
60. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, III. 4; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 147-148.
61. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, III. 6; *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 4; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 165.
62. *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 5; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 169.
63. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, III. 13; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 160.
64. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 144.
65. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 170; *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, III. 19-20.
66. *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 51.
67. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, III. 21; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 171.
68. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 172.
69. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, III. 28; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 173-190.

70. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, IV. 11; *Nāradasmṛti*. II. 31.
71. *Kātyayanasmṛti*, 213.
72. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, IV. 4; *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 27; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 216.
73. *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II. 2; *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, IV. 6; *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 28; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 216.
74. *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II. 22; *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, IV. 12; *Nāradasmṛti*, II. 29; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 217-218.
75. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 219.
76. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, IV. 14; *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 241; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 229.
77. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 230.
78. *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 75.
79. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, VII. 34.
80. *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 168; IX. 232.
81. *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II. 22; *Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra*, VI. 23.
82. *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 70-71.
83. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, VI. 2.
84. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, VI. 56; *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 145; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 306-307.
85. *Smṛticandrikā*, II. p. 66.
86. *Nāradasmṛti*, I. 69, 72.
87. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, XI. 40.
88. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, VI. 33; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 308.
89. *Yājñavalkyasmṛti*, II. 92; *Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra*, VII. 12; *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 144; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 283.
90. *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 200; *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, VII. 30; *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 85; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 319.
91. *Nāradasmṛti*, IV, 84-87.
92. *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 149-150.
93. *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 167; *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, V. 6; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 371.
94. *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 168; *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, V. 9; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 372.
95. *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 168-171; *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, V-8, 12-14; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 314, 373-377.
96. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 275.
97. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, V. 22, 28; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 378-379.
98. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, V. 21; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 380.
99. *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 235-239; *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 236.
100. *Vaśiṣtha Dharmasūtra*, XIX, 39.
101. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 214.
102. *Nāradasmṛti*, IV. 172-176.
103. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 337-338.
104. Medhātithi on *Manusmṛti*, VIII. 116.
105. *Nāradasmṛti*, III. 41.43.
106. *Bṛhaspatismṛti*, VI. 26.
107. K.P. Jayswal, *J.B.O.R.S.*, Vol. VI, pp. 245-248.
108. *Kātyāyanasmṛti*, 265.
109. For a more detailed treatment of these, see Indra Deva and Shriramā, *Growth of Legal System in Indian Society* (Allied Publishers, 1980).

# PART III

R. S. BHATNAGAR

# THE CONCEPTUAL STRUCTURE UNDERLYING THE *NĀṬYAŚĀSTRA*

In order to describe the conceptual structure underlying the *Nāṭyaśāstra* (*NS*), one may have to answer a number of questions: for example., what is the central concept dealt with in the treatise, what is the nature of this concept, how other concepts are related to the central concept, how these concepts are explicated or analyzed, and how the explication or analysis is to be assessed or evaluated. Besides these questions regarding the concepts, it is also necessary to unearth the assumptions which remain implicit but do have some bearing on the nature of these concepts, their explication, and their interrelationship.

The central concept can be identified either as the main theme of the treatise, or as one around which concepts in the treatise are organized. In the *NS*, *nāṭya* appears to be the obvious candidate both as the theme of the treatise and as the concept around which the entire treatise is structured.

Put very briefly, the objective of the *NS* is to provide a manual for a healthy educative audio-visual medium of recreation (I. 11-15).[1] When Brahmā was approached by the gods with the request for a means of recreation (*krīḍana*), he was pleased to declare the inception of a treatise which would be a fifth Veda, and which would enable one to earn *dharma*, *artha* and *yaśas*, and which would provide guidelines for practical affairs of life, which would support all arts (*śilpas*), and which would be equipped with all the sciences (*sarvaśāstrāthasampanna*) (I.14-15). Hardly has ever a treatise begun with a declaration of a scope

1. Roman numerals refer to the chapter in the *NS*, while the other numerals refer to the *sūtra*/*kārikā*/*śloka* as the case may be. The edition of the *NS* referred to is the second and revised edition, translated and edited by Manomohan Ghosh, (1967).

as wide as this. But this was not merely a verbal declaration. The qualifications laid down for the director-producer of a play and the contents of the *NS* themselves give substance to this ambitious declaration. However, the multiplicity of the objectives need not distract us from the centrality of the notion of *Nāṭya* itself. *Nāṭya* being as wide in its scope as life is bound to be connected with various *śilpas* and *śāstras*. 'There is no wise maxim, no learning, no art or craft, no device and no action that are not found in the *Nāṭya*' (I. 116).

The origin of *Nāṭya* and *Nāṭyaveda* raises important issues with respect to the interpretation of the mythical description in which it is presented. Those who are interested in these issues can profitably consult Christopher Bryski's *Concept of Ancient Indian Theatre* (Ch. III). This issue of interpretation will not concern us here. What is more relevant in the present context is the information which can be gleaned from the mythical context, with regard to the theoretical conditions of the origin of *Nāṭya*. It is interesting to note in this connection that *Nāṭya* could not have been possible if senses, imagination, emotions had no role to play. The advent of *Tretā Yuga*[2] is from the traditional point of view, obviously the beginning of decadence. However, if this traditional and derogatory context is disregarded one can immediately notice the very human character of *Nāṭya*.

In order to substantiate the claim that the *NS* is the fifth Veda, various elements of *Nāṭya* are shown to have been taken from the four Vedas: *Pāṭhya* has been taken from the *Ṛgveda*, *Gīta* from the *Sāmaveda*, *Abhinaya* from the *Yajurveda*, and *Rasa* from the *Atharvaveda* (I. 17-18). The connection between these different Vedic aspects and the elements of *Nāṭya* does not seem very intimate. Most human activities may possess in more or less measure these elements and yet we would not care to say that all such activities had their sources in the Vedas. So the question arises, was it merely a courtesy gesture towards the tradition, or was it an anxiety to link the *NS* venture with the accepted tradition and not to alienate it from the established order to infuse weight and authority of knowledge into the *NS* which led to the

2. *Tretā Yuga* forms the second part in the fourfold cyclic division of the entire human history (*Satya Yuga*, *Tretā Yuga*, *Dvāpara Yuga* and *Kali Yuga*) from the *paurāṇic* point of view.

claim of its Vedic origin. Either one or all of these motives may have been at the back of the mind of our author. For any one who realizes the character of the knowledge venture as something which is never completely new and yet which, in some radical sense, makes a fresh departure would neither reject nor accept the tradition and conventions in their entirety. This could as well be true of the author of the *NS* also.

The connection with the four *Vedas* in respect to the four aspects of *Nāṭya* indirectly points to the four basic or fundamental features of *Nāṭya*. *Pāṭhya* may be related with *vācika-abhinaya*, *abhinaya* in a restricted sense may be related with *āṅgika-abhinaya*, *saṅgīta* is as much a necessary concomitant of stage performance as is the *āhārya-abhinaya*,[3] and *Rasa* may be correlated with *sāttvika abhinaya*[4] (XXIV). These aspects can be seen as the various dimensions of *Nāṭya* which can go side by side and each of which is equally essential to *Nāṭya* as a stage performance. It is interesting to notice here that unlike Aristotle, Bharata considered spectacle to be an essential aspect of *Nāṭya* (XXVII. 101-102).

The four-fold *abhinaya* is intrinsic to *Nāṭya*. However, these intrinsic dimensions do not exhaust all the essential features of *Nāṭya*. There are two other important sets of concepts which are related with *Nāṭya*. One of these sets is related with what is called *vṛtti* and another is related with *itivṛtta* or plot of the play. It is especially from the point of view of *itivṛtta* that the action-theoretical aspect of *Nāṭya* becomes explicitly manifest. There are three ways in which the *itivṛtta* is seen as constituting several stages or parts. The first of these is characterized as *avasthā*. The entire *itivṛtta* is treated as an action and is supposed to have five *avasthās* or stages: *ārambha*, *yatna*, *prāptisambhava*, *niyata prāpti* and *phalāgama*. It is held by the *NS* experts that this scheme, that is the one conceived in terms of *avasthās*, is drawn from the

3. i.e. Costume and make-up.

4. In the *NS* context, *sattva* refers to temperament or disposition.

Wihout *rasa*, there is no significance (in a work of art). And from the combination of *vibhāva* and *vyabhicārī bhāvas* is born *rasa*.

I shall tell you about *nāṭya*, its *rasas* and *bhāvas*, not fully, only briefly. However, this can go beyond itself by analogical extension. (from *NS*, VI. 5-8).

point of view of the *nāyaka* or the hero. The second is the notion of *arthaprakṛti*. From this second point of view the *itivṛtta* is divided into five parts, namely, *bīja*, *bindu*, *patākā*, *prakarī* and *kārya*. This scheme is supposed to be governed by the *artha* or the objective of the play. Obviously this is concerned more with the theme of the play. The third way in which *itivṛtta* is structured is known as *sandhi*. *Sandhis* are also emumerated as five, namely, *mukha*, *pratimukha*, *garbha*, *vimarśa*, and *nirvahaṇa*. It is not very clear why this third scheme is sought while the first two appear to be adequate to a description of the dynamics of *Nāṭya*. If the third scheme is taken as entirely an independent one then it is not at all intelligible how the first (i.e., *mukha*) and the fifth (i.e., *nirvahaṇa*) can be *sandhis*. A *sandhi* as a joiner or as a juncture must be related with some two items. *Mukha* being the first relates only to the one that succeeds it while *nirvahaṇa*, the last, relates to the one immediately preceding it.

If we do not regard the third scheme as standing by itself, then can we regard it as a scaffold for the other two series—*avasthā* and *arthaprakṛti*? That is, can we treat each *sandhi* as relating to the corresponding parts of the other two sequences? But in that case, as everyone knows, one-to-one correspondence in terms of *sandhis* with other schemes does not come forth. It is not necessary to enter into the discussion relating to these three schemes and their mutual relationship because whatever view we may take of the matter, our conclusions would not detract us from the view that *Nāṭya* is an action-theoretic concept. Like Aristotle, Bharata also conceives of *Nāṭya* as a complicated multi-dimensional activity having a beginning, a middle, and an end. But Bharata seems to have gone a little ahead of Aristotle in analyzing these stages and provided categories in order to assimilate sub-plot (*patākā*) and ancillary plot (*prakarī*) as revealing the more complicated aspects of happenings in the sequence of events of *Nāṭya*.

*Vṛttis* are also supposed to have a fundamental role in *Nāṭya*. They can be understood as defining the dominant mood and thereby the style of the play. In *Nāṭaka* and *Prakaraṇa* all the four of them, i.e., *bhāratī*, *ārabhaṭī*, *sātvattī* and *kaiśikī* are supposed to have some role, while in other forms of drama not all of them may be presented. *Vṛttis* are also ascribed a mythical origin and are also associated with the four Vedas (XXII. 1-24).

To recapitulate the conceptual structure of the *NS* taking *Nāṭya* as the central action-theoretic concept, *Nāṭya* involves concepts relating to an activity which has a beginning and comes to a fulfilment, concepts which relate the inner-felt aspects of experience (*sattva*) with the manifest patterns of behaviour (*āṅgika abhinaya*), concepts relating to the ancillary needs of *Nāṭya* such as spectacle involving music, dance, and costume, and concepts relating to the dominant moods distinctive of a particular play. Besides these, the *NS* also describes the indices by which a *nāṭya's* success or failure may be judged. In this context the concept of *nāṭya-siddhi* and *nāṭyaghāta* are significant. A remarkable feature of *nāṭyasiddhi* as described by Bharata is a catalogue of the graded reaction of audience in terms of their appreciative and jubilant feelings and behaviour which can be empirically observed and recorded. Besides these there are some extra-human or *daivikī* indices which testify to the success of a *Nāṭya* and they are: the auditorium is full, no disturbance takes place, no unusual occurrence happens and no noise is made (XXVII. 16-17). Interestingly, another *daivī* index has been described as the one which includes an excessive display of *sattva*, and expresses the psychological states clearly. Perhaps the idea is that a desired presentation is ultimately a matter of divine grace (XXVII. 16).

Another significant aspect relating to the assessment of *Nāṭya* concerns the differentiated reaction and appreciation of the audience. Bharata was quite aware that the presentation of a superior order cannot be appreciated by all (XXVII. 57). Appreciation is conditioned by the age, disposition and cultural determination of the audience (XXVII. 58-60). It is in view of this that the concept of *pravṛtti* is introduced. People living in different parts of the Indian peninsula are characterised by him in terms of their distinctive dispositions, aptitude and cultural milieu. For example, *Āvantikas* inhabiting central and western parts were characterized as having *sāttvatī* and *kaiśikī vṛttis*; *Dākṣiṇātyas* inhabiting southern parts were characterized as having *kaiśikī vṛtti*; *Pāñcālas* inhabiting western-northern parts were characterized as having *sāttvatī* and *ārabhaṭī vṛttis* and *Oḍra-Māgadhas* inhabiting the eastern regions by *bhāratī* and *kaiśikī vṛttis*. *Pravṛttis* indicate the way people dress, behave and, of course, the moods or *vṛttis* that they exhibit. Thorough acquaintance with *pravṛttis* is a

necessary requirement for the director and the actors in order that *Nāṭya* acquires a semblance of reality. However, mere consonance with the behaviour patterns and life styles of people in different regions will yield only a *lokadharmī nāṭaka*. *Nāṭyadharmī* presentation would involve more than this. Theatrical embellishment, graceful *āṅgika abhinaya*, dances, supernatural elements, etc., would characterise a *nāṭyadharmī* presentation. *Nāṭyadharmitā* also includes the methods of representing on stage effects which can only be presented indirectly or symbolically (XIV. 67-70). *Nāṭyadharmitā* and *Nāṭya tattva* (XXVI. 128) are concepts which point to the autonomy of *nāṭya* concept. It is within this context that we can include the concept of *nāṭyaghāta* or the blemishes which might mar the presentation. These *ghātas* are traced to the various sources, but the ones which are due to actors themselves are endemic to *Nāṭya* itself. Unnatural *abhinaya*, erratic movements and gait, forgetting the dialogues or text, faulty pronunciation, speaking timidly, letting the crown fall, fault in music and rhythm are some such flaws (XXVII. 24-37).

Bharata enumerates certain types of items which ought not to be presented on the stage. Some prohibitions are made due to the fact that the performance may be witnessed by all the members of a family together. Hence, the presentation should not include events which may cause embarassment to such an audience (XXIV. 295). Such events include, bathing or decorating the body (of women, XXIV, 239), sleeping and acts of intimacy (XXIV. 291-295). A well written *nāṭaka* must have a well-defined sequence of various stages; be embellished by *alaṅkāras* and *sthāyibhāvas*, enjoyable themes, and exalted speeches, should depict character of great people and good conduct should be easy to produce on the stage and capable of giving pleasure. The *nāṭakakāra* should construct his play after observing people's character, their strength and weakness, and their mode of enjoyment and reasoning (XXI. 113-124).

The above is a very sketchy account of the conceptual structure of the *NS*. Further questions which need to be answered are the nature of these concepts and how they are to be evaluated. The discourse of the *NS* is of mixed type. It includes both prescriptive and descriptive expressions, as Hazari Prasad Dwivedi has rightly noticed. It also includes beliefs which may

have appeared sound to readers of the *NS* when it was written, but which may not appear so to readers of the *NS* today. Correspondingly, we may identify three types of concepts in the *NS*, namely descriptive concepts, prescriptive concepts, and belief concepts. This distinction helps us to see why there can be no homogenous method of assessment of all that is said in the *NS*. The assessment will have to differ according to the nature of the concepts and discourse.

The chapters dealing with how people belonging to different regions live, speak and behave and the chapters dealing with various musical instruments are mainly descriptive. Chapters concerned with various types of *abhinaya* are mainly prescriptive. The narration involved in the description of *nāṭyotpatti*, Shiva's advice to include *taṇḍu's nṛtya*, origin of *vṛttis* and the descent of *Nāṭya* from heaven, involve beliefs which are not empirically testable but which provide a certain mode of explanation not necessarily compelling to modern ears.

The specific domain of *Nāṭya* is mainly prescriptive and therefore the concepts relating to this domain are action-theoretic. The various injunctions can be understood as being addressed to the director-producer, announcers, actors, critics and even to the audience as the context demands. Such injunctions include what the director-producer should know and be able to do; how the choice of actors and personnel is to be made; what qualifications the audience and the critics should possess in order to properly appreciate the *nāṭyaprayoga*.

When it comes to the question as to how to decide where no rule or principle is available from the text, Bharata advises us to depend on the observation of prevalent practice. The real success and approval of *nāṭaka* depends on people. Hence *nāṭakakāras* (playwrights) and *Prayoktṛs* (producers) should take the people as their ultimate authority (XXVI. 120-121, 126). Remarks such as these occur in combination with reference to Vedic and *ādhyātmika* sources of validation. But their liberal and flexible drift is unmistakable.

This leads us to become aware of certain assumptions which seem to inform the general tenor of the *NS*. Although right in the beginning an explicit mention is made in respect of the availability of *Nāṭyaveda* to *sarvavarṇas*, yet its secular character

often gets obscured because of *alaukika* or transcendental allusions. Occasionally, however, the secular note creeps in, e.g., while listing instructions in connection with the construction of theatres, Bharata remarks 'creations of gods (observed) in house and gardens are the outcome of their (mere) will, while men are to make careful efforts in their creation of gods. I shall now describe the characteristics of a house suitable for human beings.' (II. 22-23). This remark clearly points to an eliminative procedure. Towards the end of Chapter XXI an instruction has been laid down that a *nāṭaka* should be composed with pleasant and easily intelligible words (XXI. 127) but the reason given is quite odd. It is said that since the intellectual standard of people is gradually declining hence the *nāṭakakāra* should use a simpler language. Soon however, another quite different reason is advanced. It is said that the use of words like *cekrīḍita* is as odd as a courtezan in the company of a brahman with *kamaṇḍalu* (XXI. 128). Obviously the later remark is sensible while the earlier one remains intriguing. Throughout the text this puzzling ambivalence may be noticed. On the one hand, reverence towards the Vedas and a belief in *alaukika* order is expressed while on the other hand, a strictly human orientation which is not class-oriented but has an underlying sympathy for the people of the lowest social strata also, is sought to be brought into focus. Thus the assumptions which underlie the thinking of the *NS* seem to point to a secular, empirical and humanistic outlook.

Finally, some remarks regarding the *NS* as a cognitive exercise are being made to round off this short discussion. The first thing that strikes the reader of the *NS* is its practical concern. A manual is sought to be provided for those who may be interested in theatre. Obviously this leads to a description of the nature, objective significance of theatre for all those concerned. But this practical concern is not merely didactic. By and large, the *NS* remains non-commital to any specific value-transmission. It is, of course, said to be of educative value but that appears to be more in the sense of people coming to know about *itihāsa* and how people live in different regions. *Nāṭya* ought to appeal to people; it ought to entertain them, and it ought to allow them to be free from the worries of their daily chores. These objectives

are not value-laden in the sense of some specific value structure which would provide an ideal for the individual or society.

Another thing which attracts attention is the meticulous care that Bharata has given to details. Even though the treatise is concerned with a mode of entertainment, the author does not treat the matter lightly. In fact, he seeks to put it on the same pedestal as that of the Vedas.

The third and the last point that strikes one is the fact that though the descriptive material needed in order to meet the requirements of action is subordinate to the main purpose, yet it has been given the same amount of care and analysis as the rest of the treatise. In fact, the author is fully aware of its significance for he takes the *NS* as including in its scope all the sciences.

Incidentally, these features appear to be common to other old treatises also. The *Arthaśāstra* is one such example.

MUKUND LATH

# THE *NĀṬYA* AS CONCEIVED BY BHARATA

The *Nāṭyaśāstra* is a self-conscious theoretical work, with a rich framework of interlinked concepts. I believe that in order to understand this framework we must first understand what kind of object Bharata thought *nāṭya* to be. For this we must turn to the first chapter, which though largely mythical in its style of discourse, meaningfully embodies the ideals informing *nāṭya* in its form and content.

As a *śāstra*, that is a discursive tract concerning a specific discipline, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is both a descriptive and a prescriptive work, similar in this respect to many other ancient *śāstra* works. To emphasize its prescriptive character it also calls itself the *Nāṭyaveda*. And it assumes a *Purāṇa*-like tone and manner, particularly in the 1st chapter: it is a description—*lakṣaṇa*—of *nāṭya* by the divine sage Bharata, who had it from *Brahmā*, the Creator Himself, the creator not only of the world but also of *nāṭya* (*NS*, I. 1-4).* The prescriptive force of such a *lakṣaṇa* is obvious.

The *Nāṭyaśāstra* begins with the *ṛṣis* asking Bharata three questions: How was *nāṭya* created, for whom and what are its characteristics? The answer Bharata gives to the first question, how was *nāṭya* created, is significant in trying to get at the character or nature of the object, *nāṭya*, that Bharata was setting out to delineate.

Bharata begins by speaking of what occasioned the creation of *nāṭya*. He gives us a history which we would call a myth.

*All references to the *NS* (the *Nāṭyaśāstra*) are to the four-volume, G.O.S. edition of the text, published with the only extant commentary on it, the *Abhinavabhāratī* of Abhinavagupta, by the Gaekwad Oriental Institute, Baroda.

But, call it what we may, the story provides an insight into Bharata's conception of *nāṭya*; indeed, I think, of any similar 'affective' or 'art' object. Bharata relates that at the end of *Kṛtayuga*, the first and most perfect age of the four-age cycle of world-history—an age when *dharma* reigned supreme, 'standing on all four legs'—lowly instincts began to govern the actions of people, they became a prey to lust and greed, their minds deluded by envy, anger and the like and they began to experience both suffering as well as joy. Indra and the other gods then went to Brahmā and asked him to create a *krīḍanīyaka*—'a sport', 'a play', 'a game'—that would be both for the ears and the eyes. But they wanted a very curious kind of a game. They wanted a game that would not only divert but also teach. They wanted, in fact, nothing short of a new Veda; the existing Vedas were not for the *śūdras*, therefore they wanted a Veda that could be *sārvavarṇika*, meant for every one, for people of all *varṇas*. Brahmā agreed to take up the task. He went into meditation, desiring to create, what was called, *nāṭya*, a *kriḍanīyaka* which would serve as a fifth Veda; which would be *dharmya*, *arthya*, *yaśasya* and *sopadeśya*—that is, teach moral and practical wisdom, provide glory and instruction. For people of the coming ages it would be '*sarvakarmānudarśakaṃ*'—a guide to conduct.

Brahmā then thought of the four Vedas and from each of them he derived a distinct element, which he put together to create a new Veda, the *nāṭya*. From *Ṛgveda* he took *pāṭhya*, from *Sāmaveda*, *gīta*; from *Yajurveda* the *abhinayas* and from *Atharvaveda* the *rasas*. With these he created a *prayoga*, a performance, a spectacle which was an *anukṛti*, an imitation: an imitation of the entire cosmos, *triloka*. For the performance of this *anukṛti*, Brahmā put together into a spectacular whole not only the four elements he had taken from the four Vedas but, indeed, every skill or art, every discipline or branch of knowledge that was in existence. The *nāṭya* was clearly a composite object, combining disparate elements into a single organic whole. Bharata makes the strong assertion that *nāṭya* was *sarvaśilpapravartaka*, that it gave rise to all the *śilpas*, the arts and skills. But, interestingly, the situation is just the opposite. Drama is, historically speaking, a late art, not as essential an aspect of human culture as music, dance, poetry or painting. It depends on its very being on a mixture of various arts

at various levels, as Bharata had the great vision to see, and a degeneration in the right balance of the combinations can be fatal for it. Not all cultures have it and not at all times—it is a fragile and precarious product.

A little reflection on the myth concerning the origin of *nāṭya*, reveals other characteristics of this object as Bharata saw it. It was an object made for a world just introduced to suffering and a loss of moral perfection.

To begin with it was a normative object, what we would call a non-natural object like *dharma*: what Bharata gives us are rules for its formation and the ideals governing them. It is indeed interesting to compare it with *dharma*, another concept which is central to Indian thought and culture.

*Dharma* is definitive of man, necessary to man in the sense that without *dharma* man cannot be man. Man's *dharma* was created *with* man; it was a necessary characteristic of man. As Manu says:

> *sarveṣāṁ tu sa nāmāni karmāṇi ca pṛthak pṛthak |*
> *vedaśabdebhya evādau pṛthaksaṁsthāśca nirmame ||*
> —*Manusmṛti*, I. 21.

(After creating the world and the living beings, including men) He (God) created right in the beginning (*ādau*), different names and actions for each through the word of the Veda, instituting a different framework of behaviour (*saṁsthā* = *vyavasthā* according to Medhātithi) for each.

The *saṁsthā* for man, instituted through the Veda right along with his creation, was *dharma*.

Unlike *dharma*, *nāṭya*, though normative, is a *krīḍanīyaka*, a game,—a *krīḍanīyaka* which was created as a diversion and obviously not necessarily for man to be man. It is even antagonistic in a way to *dharma*. A condition for its creation was the decline of *dharma*.

Yet, paradoxically, it was created out of the Vedas, was itself a Veda, meant to teach *dharma*. It was a curious *krīḍanīyaka* indeed, created by Brahmā Himself who can create only what is good, *dharmya*. Again, as I just said, we think of a *krīḍanīyaka* as something quite the contrary of 'necessary', something we can do

without. But a *krīḍanīyaka* created by the Creator himself has, presumably, the quality of being necessary, for would the Creator create anything which was not necessary?

Just as the weakening of *dharma* was a condition for the creation of *nāṭya*, so was the fact that lust, greed, envy, anger and the like had now entered the constitution of the world and man, people now knew both sorrow and joy. This was obviously necessary for an affective object to be created, one which, moreover, shows people in action endeavouring to attain their desires. The fact that an object like *nāṭya* can be a diversion only for a creature of emotions and desires, joys and sorrows, is also emphasized by Bharata in another context. The actions of gods if shown in a *nāṭya* were to be shown as taking place in *Bhāratavarṣa*, the land where joys are mixed with sorrows and where the achievement of desires depends on endeavour. The gods have no sorrow, neither need they make an effort to achieve what they want (*NS*, XVIII. 98-100).

To sum up the reflections above, *nāṭya* emerges as an affective audiovisual object—an art of performance or spectacle—built up of a combination of different arts and disciplines and imbued with the moral purpose of teaching right action, *dharmakarmānudarśana*. It was, to use Bharata's terminology, a *śravya* and *dṛśya krīḍanīyaka*, combining disparate *śilpas* and *śāstras* into a unified whole in the manner of an *alātacakra*, with the purpose of teaching *dharma*.

Bharata further qualifies *nāṭya* as an *anukṛti*, an imitation, an imitation of the entire cosmos, of *triloka*. But the idea was not to create a replica of the world. Brahmā, the Creator, could have done that had he wanted, but that would have defeated both his purpose of creating a *krīḍanīyaka* to please this world and to instruct it. The *anukṛti* Brahmā made was an abstraction, a spectacle abstracted from the actions of men and women—even gods, we have seen, were to be shown as men and women.

It was, in Bharata's conception, an *anukṛti* of the world, which was designed to create a world of its own, a world that could both delight and teach *dharma*. To put it in Bharata's conceptual terminology, *nāṭya* was to be an *anukṛti*, which though depending on *lokasvabhāva*, was to be *nāṭya-dharmin*, that is, a world transformed through art, or rathei, in this case, through a mixture of

various arts. Defining *nāṭya* towards the end of the first chapter, Bharata says:

*yo'yam svabhāvo lokasya sukhaduḥkhasamanvitaḥ|*
*so'ṅgādyabhinayopeto nāṭyamityabhidhīyate||*

(*NS*, I.119)

'*Nāṭya* is the human condition with its joys and sorrows, to which are added music and the different kinds of *abhinayas*.'

The expression *aṅgādi* in this verse can be understood in two senses; both, however, implying that *nāṭya* is not just presenting the world as it is; it is a transformatory category—transformatory in the sense that it is presented as a transformation of the world with the aim of transforming the world itself. The expression *aṅgādi*, says Abhinava, can mean the different aspects of *abhinaya* (*āṅgika*, *vācika* and so forth), which included dance and was conceived as stylised, or it could mean music, an integral part of *nāṭya* as conceived by Bharata. Significantly, Bharata defines not only *nāṭya*, but the category of the *nāṭyadharmin* as opposed to *lokadharmin* in almost identical terms:

*yo'yaṁ svabhāvo lokasya sukhaduḥkhakriyātmakaḥ|*
*so'ṅgābhinayasaṁyukto nāṭyadharmī prakīrtitaḥ||*

(*NS*, XIII, 81)

A detailed description of *nāṭyadharmin* as a category occurs in the thirteenth chapter of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* where it can be clearly seen as a category seeking to transform what it presents. And this in two senses, a weak sense and a strong sense. In the weak sense it is a transformation of *lokasvabhāva*, of 'nature' we might say, necessitated in any *anukṛti* by the medium into which it is translated; even the most realistic imitation transforms in this sense. Any medium has to use 'non-natural' devices to present nature. Thus some *nāṭyadharmin* devices are: the use of 'asides'—*āsannoktāni ca yadvākyāni na śṛṇvanti parasparam*—the *ākāśabhāṣita*—as in *Bhāṇas*, the *kakṣyāvibhāga* and the like.

But in Bharata, *nāṭyadharmin* also means transformation of *loka* in a much stronger sense. It consists (1) in the use of poetic speech, heightened gesture, dance, music and the like and (2) in the use of specially designed narratives or plots, abstracted from *loka* and imbued with a moral purpose. These two aspects of the

special kind of *anukṛti* which was called *nāṭya*, we will call the *vṛttyātmaka* and the *vṛttātmaka*. But if these sound too similar to each other, we might use *prayoga* and *itivṛtta*, also taken from Bharata.[1]

These two represent the spectacle and the plot aspects of *nāṭya*. I used the term *vṛttyātmaka* for the spectacle aspect with a purpose. The aim of the various elements put togethar for *prayoga* or spectacle was to create a holistic effect called *vṛtti*, through which the plot, the *itivṛtta*, was to be affectively enacted.

*Itivṛtta* rendered through *prayoga*, produces, in Bharata's scheme, the *rūpaka*; in fact the *daśarūpaka*, for the various elements of both *prayoga* and *itivṛtta* admit a multiplicity of combinations both within each and with each other. The *daśarūpaka* delimits the possibility to ten typical forms. It also sets the themes to be used. The *itivṛtta* in different *rūpakas* had different themes and the *prayoga* was designed to suit the theme. These *rūpakas* were in actual performances Bharata's *nāṭya* (cf. Abhinava: *anye tu naṭanīyamānukaraṇaṁ daśarūpakameva nāṭyam. tasyedaṁ śāstram. daśarūpakalakṣaṇameva hīdam.*)

Let me now treat *prayoga* and *itivṛtta* in some detail, for just as *śabda* and *artha* together from *sāhitya*, through an *avinābhāvasambandha*, so do *prayoga* and *itivṛtta* together form *rūpaka* or *nāṭya*. But first let me give you a textual justification for making these two categories of *prayoga* and *itivṛtta*.

Looking at the text of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, we can discover a demarcation of concepts into the two aspects of *prayoga* and *itivṛtta*. One of the concerns which Brahmā had in mind when he thought of creating the *Nāṭyaveda*, was its *saṅgraha* (*NS*, I.14). This is a technical term meaning the collection of topics and concepts which, together, describe a subject in its totality. Bharata

1. For those who might think that the category of *nāṭyadharmin* as described in the 13th Chapter, does not seem to include the *itivṛtta* in it, I would like to point out two things (1) the plot as conceived by Bharata is clearly an abstraction from *loka*; (2) at the end of the 19th Chapter where *itivṛtta* is discoursed upon there occurs almost an echo of the *śloka* we have quoted above from the 1st chapter, with a slight modification to suit the context:

*yo'yaṁ svabhāvo lokasya nānāvasthāntarātmakaḥ /*
*so'ṅgādyabhinayairyukto nāṭyamityabhidhīyate //*
(*NS*, XIX, 144).

takes up the *saṅgraha* of *nāṭya* at the beginning of the sixth Chapter. His *saṅgraha* has ten topics :

*rasā bhāvā hyabhinayā dharmī vṛttipravṛttayaḥ/*
*siddhiḥ svarāstathātodyaṁ gānaṁ raṅgaśca saṅgrahaḥ//*
(*NS*, VI. 10)

Of these ten topics we can make the following groups:

1. *rasas* and *bhāvas*
2. *abhinayas, pravṛttis, svaras, gāna, ātodya* and *vṛttis*
3. *siddhi*
4. *raṅga*
5. *dharmin.*

Though some of the concepts here inform *nāṭya* as whole,—concepts such as those of *rasa, bhāva* and *dharmin*, the list is biased towards the *prayoga* aspect of *nāṭya*. There is nothing here about the *itivṛtta*, of which Bharata speaks later, in chapter nineteen, and which Bharata calls the *śarīra*, the body of *nāṭya* (*rasa* by implication, is taken to be the soul) defining it through a set of distinct concepts, which are not, however, listed under *saṅgraha*. Why this happened is a historical, rather than logical, matter about which I might speculate later, but the *Nāṭyaśāstra* clearly segregates the *itivṛtta* and the *prayoga*.

The *itivṛtta*, the plot, not only provided 'body' to the *nāṭya*, it was through *itivṛtta* that its moral purpose, its aim of being *karmānudarśaka* was truly realised. Let us look at how Bharata conceives *itivṛtta*.

He conceives it as a human action undertaken for the attainment of a desirable goal. The *nāṭyadharmin* enters here in the sense that in a *nāṭya* the action must end in the attainment of its fruit. Failure is not contemplated, though obstacles are. The idea is to show the moral relation between *karma* and *phala* as an inevitable relation and thus present to the audience one of the most central ideals of Indian ethical thought in living form. And further, the goal was to be shown as attained in this very life.

The action, from the conception of a desire to its attainment was divided into five stages called the five *sandhis*, each with a different name. There were two unifying factors, integrally related to the concept of *sandhi*, called the *bīja* and the *bindu* which im-

parted the sense of a single whole to an *itivṛtta*. *Bīja*, literally, 'the seed', is the more central of these two. It was understood in terms of the metaphor of a seed growing into a tree till it comes to fruit:

*svalpamātraṁ samutsṛṣṭaṁ bahudhā yadvisarpati/*
*phalāvasānaṁ yaccaiva bījaṁ tatparikīrtitam//*
(*NS*, XIX. 22)

That tiny object which thrown on the ground spreads out variously, till it comes to fruition, is called the *bīja*.

*Bīja*, clearly, was the general principle, the ideal governing the construction of a plot which was to grow organically, the end to be contained in the beginning. It was to grow from a small beginning to great fruits. *Bindu* which can be subsumed under *bīja* was the name given to narrative devices by which an action showing signs of going astray was brought in line with its goal.

Besides the main plot, called the *ādhikārika itivṛtta* or *vastu*, (another term for *itivṛtta*), there could be subplots of various size and importance, subsidiary to the main plot, the *prakarī* and the *patākā*.

I give these details simply to show that because Bharata has no separate *saṅgraha* for *itivṛtta*, it does not mean that one could not have been made. Indeed *itivṛtta* deserves a *saṅgraha*.

The *nāṭya* was a complex whole. A synthesis of gradually increasing wholes at various levels of formation. It used, Bharata says, various arts and sciences. Each of these was a realm unto itself. Bharata describes the more important of these in some detail, the aim was to show how they became an *aṅga*, a limb, in the totality of *nāṭya*. They had to be moulded for that purpose. We find, therefore, two sets of concepts for the disciplines which Bharata treats in detail. One is the set of concepts with which the discipline defined itself and the second those through which it was moulded to suit *nāṭya*. This can be seen very clearly, for example, in the section on music, where music is first defined through a set of concepts which are later used in association with *nāṭya*-oriented concepts such as *rasa*, *bhāva*, to define a separate category of music for the theatre, the *dhruvā*, or the *gāna*, one of the topics in Bharata's *saṅgraha* listed earlier. Similarly, take the topic *svara*, listed with *gāna*. The short *kārikā*

which defines it in Chapter six (*NS*. VI,27) is misleading. It makes *svara* a concept under music, not under *nāṭya*. But interestingly, we find that *svara* is discussed within two distinct contexts in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. One, where it is obvious, in discussing music in which *svara* is one of the central concepts (music—*gāndharva*—is defined as *svara-tāla-padātmakam*). *Svara* also occurs in the 17th Chapter, a section devoted to *pāṭhya*, utterance of dramatic speech, for elucidating the notion of *kāku*, affective utterance, for which the voice naturally has to do *āroha* and *avaroha* over *svaras*. *Svara* in Bharata's *saṅgraha* is thus actually another name for *pāṭhya*, the term used in association with *nāṭya* in the first Chapter. Just as *dhruvā* is lifted from the realm of *gāhdharva*, *pāṭhya* is lifted from the realm of *bhāṣā*, more particularly phonetics which formed a part of any discussion of lahguage. These were realms capable of yielding affective or aesthetic wholes on their own. *Gāna* and *pāṭhya* are indeed minor 'wholes' on their own. But in *nāṭya* they combined, with *abhinayas*, *pravṛttis* and *ātodya* (drum-playing) to form a larger whole, the *vṛtti*. Each of the realms forming *vṛtti*, being capable of multiple formations, could give rise to many *vṛttis*. *Bharata* speaks of four *vṛttis*, which his *nāṭya* used, that is, which were used for forming the *daśarūpaka*.

*Vṛttis* were the largest complex wholes formed for *prayoga*. They differed with the different emphasis that was placed on the parts constituting it, as well as the form in which each part was associated with the totality of a *vṛtti*. The parts and the whole were interdependent. *Vṛtti* is not easy to define. It was the texture given to the entire *prayoga* as designed towards the presentation of the kind of *rūpaka* intended. In fact, a single *vṛtti* was not presented. Different *rūpakas* called for a different mix of *vṛttis*, though one or other could dominate.

The nature of the *vṛtti*-mix depended on the *rasa* being aimed at. Just as *dharmin*—synonymous for all practical purposes with *nāṭyadharmin*—was an overall concept, a concept informing *nāṭya* as a whole, so was *rasa*. *Rasa* was the total affective tone of the *nāṭya*. Like *vṛtti* it was a mix. In fact Bharata describes it through the metaphor of a mixture: *rasa* was a cocktail, the savour produced through mixing different ingredients into a single drink. As in producing *vṛtti*, similarly in producing *rasa*, the part and the whole determined each other (*NS*, VI. 33-37).

*Rasa*, unlike *vṛtti*, was integrally connected with both the *prayoga* and *itivṛtta* aspects of *nāṭya*. We have spoken of its connection with *vṛtti*. It was connected with the *itivṛtta*, through *prakṛti* and *avasthā*, characters and situations, subsumed under *vibhāva* of the *Rasasūtra*:

*Vibhāvānubhāvavyabhicārisaṁyogād rasaniṣpattiḥ* (*NS*, VI. 32).

Without going into the details that the above sketch of an analysis needs both for clarification and justification, I would like to end by discussing one important matter regarding *rasa*. *Rasa* has been considered by many as definitive of *nāṭya*, its distinguishing characteristic. This it is not. At least not of Bharata's *nāṭya*. *Nāṭya* according to Bharata, as we have seen, was an amalgam of *prayoga* and *itivṛtta*, the resulting product being the *rūpaka*, the *daśarūpakas*, because Bharata allowed ten different combinations of the various elements of *prayoga* and *itivṛtta* as permissible. The distinguishing characteristic of Bharata's *nāṭya*, its *vyavacchedaka lakṣaṇa*, was being a *rūpaka*.

Of the *rūpakas*, two were paradigmatic: the *prakaraṇa* and the *nāṭaka*. They differed from each other in their theme, but in one thing they were equal: in them the full possibilities of all the elements of *prayoga* and *itivṛtta* were realized. They were *pūrṇāṅga*; others were *hīnāṅga* in one way or the other.

We can now see why *rasa* could not be a *vyavacchedaka lakṣaṇa* for Bharata's *nāṭya*. *Rasa* was the affective *savour* of the mix of elements that produced the *rūpakas*. It could be present in mixes other than the *rūpakas*. *Rasa* has a bias towards *prayoga*. Bharata discusses it with *prayoga* topics. But in his total vision, the *itivṛtta* is given as much importance as *prayoga*. A great deal of later drama degenerated from the true *rūpaka* ideal. We hear of *uparūpakas* which were operatic or ballet-like, the *itivṛtta* becoming more and more loose, losing both its structure and moral purpose.

I have just spoken of the *uparūpakas* being later than the *daśarūpaka*. In the form in which we hear of them, they certainly were later. Yet let us consider this. I said earlier that many of the arts, constituting Bharata's *nāṭya* were earlier than Bharata. So must have been some of the mixes of different arts: ballet-like and

operatic mixtures of different arts have certainly deeper and older roots in all cultures than true drama. It was only in the *daśarūpaka*, specially *nāṭaka* and *prakaraṇa*, that they found true dramatic form in India.

K. J. SHAH

# THE THEORY OF *RASA*: ITS CONCEPTUAL STRUCTURE

'Without *rasa,* there is no significance (in a work of art). And from the combination of *vibhāva, and vyabhicārī bhāvas* is born *rasa.*

'I shall tell you about *nāṭya,* its *rasas* and *bhāvas* not fully, only briefly. However, this can go beyond itself by analogical extension.'

(from *NS,* VI. 5-8)

## Introduction

I begin with two simple statements about *rasa* which contain all the terms which are generally used in a discussion of *rasa.* Then I briefly explain these terms using the *Rāmāyaṇa* story for illustration. In the next section, the interrelations of these terms and their complexities are explained. The account given is simple, leaving out considerable detail but adequate for presenting the main central ideas of the theory. This has the advantage that without being lost in details, in what is subjective or temporal, it is possible to formulate questions more or less similar to the questions that are raised by other thinkers or schools of thought. In so far as I succeed in doing so, the theory of *rasas* is freed from its historic isolation (I have taken a literary work of art as my example, and do not consider at all other kinds of works of art.)

## I. Introduction of the Terminology

What is *rasa*? Let me begin with some simple statements about *rasa.* Without *rasa,* there is no significance in a work of art. But how is *rasa* brought about? It is born of a combination of *vibhāva, anubhāva* and *vyabhicārī bhāva.* It is also said that from the combination of *vibhāva* and *anubhāva,* we have all the *bhāvas*—eight *sthāyī bhāvas,* thirty-three *vyabhicārī bhāvas* and eight *sattvaja bhāvas.* (The last two statements are not quite the same, but we

shall let that pass. The confusion that this difference might create is not significant; in any case it is manageable).

First, I shall attempt to briefly explain the terms used in the above paragraph with the help of some illustrations. I shall use the *Rāmāyaṇa* story for purposes of illustration. Traditionally, the *Rāmāyaṇa* is thought of as depicting the *karuṇa rasa* (compassion), and the corresponding *sthāyī bhāva* is said to be *śoka* (sorrow). When the *sthāyī bhāva* is presented by the work of art, the spectator's experience of it is the experience of the *karuṇa rasa* (compassion). It is important to note that *rasa* is a matter of experience, but it is also nccessary to empasize that of which it is the experience, i.e., the *sthāyī bhāva*. Such an experience without the *sthāyī bhāva* is not the experience of *rasa*. But what is *sthāyī bhāva*? *Śoka* is the *sthāyī bhāva* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the dominant, the overall feature, the main theme of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The *vyabhicārīs* are the transitory or subsidiary moods, situations which may or may not be of grief or sadness, but which directly or indirectly contribute to the main theme. For example, the *Rāmāyaṇa* has the situation in which Rāma leaves for the forest, Daśaratha faints and we have an atmosphere of sadness; or there is the situation of Rāma's wedding which gives rise to a mood of joy, and the fight with Rāvaṇa which brings about a situation, a mood of heroism. The atmosphere of sadness directly contributes to the main theme, whereas the moods of joy and heroism contribute indirectly to the theme of *śoka*. A more or less complex patterning of *vyabhicārīs* is used to present the main theme, the *sthayī bhāva*.

What is a *vyabhicārī bhāva*? We shall explain it with reference to the instances we have already mentioned. From the instances we have mentioned we can see that the *vyabhicārī bhāva* is a state or a mood in which one can distinguish two factors, one which provides the occasion for a response, and the response, e.g., Rāma's going to the forest provides the occasion and Daśaratha's fainting is a response. The former is called *vibhāva*, the latter is called *anubhāva*. It is important to note that here the response is a psycho-physiological reaction like fainting. Such a response is called a *sattvaja bhāva*. Not all responses are *sattvaja bhāvas*. The response could be just an entreaty to Rama not to go. This too would be an *anubhāva*. Thus, a *vyabhicārī bhāva* is, on the one hand, a subsidiary situation (characterised by mood) involving a

*vibhāva* and an *anubhāva*, and on the other hand, is a part of the pattern of a *sthāyī bhāva*.

According to Bharata there are eight *rasas*, eight *sthāyī bhāvas*, thirty three *vyabhicārī bhāvas* and eight *sattvaja bhāvas*. (A list of these is provided in the appendix).

## II. Some Further Explanation and Comments

### 1. *Vibhāva, anubhāva, vyabhicārī bhāva and sthāyī bhāva*

The distinction between *vibhāva* and *anubhāva* is not such that a certain event can be a *vibhāva* only. The *anubhāva* of one situation could be the *vibhāva* of another, and *vice versa*. For example, the *anubhāva* of Daśaratha's fainting could be a *vibhāva* for some one who would look for a physician, etc. From this case it can be seen that *sattvaja bhāva* can be a *vibhāva*.

The relationship between the various *bhāvas* is indeed complex. I shall only indicate the complexity without attempting to clarify it. Many *vibhāvas* have the same *anubhāva*; and the combinations of *vibhāva* and *anubhāva* may give us different *vyabhicārīs*. For example, drowsiness as *anubhāva* belongs to two different *vyabhicārīs*, indolence and yearning. The same is true of a *sattvaja bhāva* which can be a *vibhāva* or an *anubhāva* or even a *vyabhicārī bhāva*; for example, perspiration is an *anubhāva* of laughter; but it is a *vyabhicārī* of so many *sthāyī bhāvas*. What is true in the case of *anubhāvas* and *sattvaja bhāvas* is true of *sthāyī bhāvas* also; because *sthāyīs* can be *vyabhicārīs*. This can be clearly seen in the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* where a whole range of *bhāvas* is subsidiary to the *sthāyī* of *karuṇa* or *śānta*.

In view of the foregoing, the understanding of an event is not in terms of its being this or that event but in terms of its place in a complex pattern. Distraction of mind could be an immediate response to any one of a number of events acting as *vibhāvas*—accidental injury, adversity, sickness, fear, agitation, remembering past enmity, etc. But distraction of mind could be a part of a more complex situation. For example, it is a subsidiary state of *vipralambha śṛṅgāra* and also of *bībhatsa*. Both the *sthāyīs* have other *vyabhicārīs* also. They together form a pattern to give a *sthāyī*.

The complex patterns formed by *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas*, *vyabhi-*

*cārī, sattvaja* and *sthāyī bhāvas* provide us with a treasure of rich human possibilities. These possibilities are mentioned in *NS* VI. 5 to 8 which I have quoted at the beginning. (I hope the above account is neither too sketchy nor misleading).

Though it is not possible to sharply divide the *bhāvas* into *vibhāvas, anubhāvas* and *vyabhicārī bhāvas,* it is possible to distinguish *vibhāvas* and *anubhāvas* on the one hand, and *vyabhicārīs* and *sthāyīs* on the other. As far as the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is concerned, *vibhāvas* and *anubhāvas* are *elementary* phenomena and are in no need of explanation or definition. According to Bharata (a) they are *lokasvabhāvasaṃsiddhāḥ* or *lokasvabhāvānugāminaḥ* i.e., they are in accordance with human nature; and (b) they are *lokaprasiddhāḥ* or *lokayātrānugāminḥ,* i.e., they are familiar to people and are in accordance with people's practice. However, the *vyabhicarīs* and the *sthāyīs* are complex and can and need to be explained in terms of *vibhāvas* and *anubhāvas* and their patterns.

## III. Some Issues and Comments

(1) *Bhāva* and *rasa* : Do the *bhāvas* come out of the *rasas,* or the *rasas* out of the *bhāvas*? This issue is raised in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* itself, and it is answered differently in successive verses. One answer is: 'It is apparent that the sentiments arise from the states and not the states from the sentiments' (*NS.* VI. 34-35). But immediately afterwards we have a different answer: 'There is no *rasa* without *bhāva,* nor *bhāva* without *rasa.* Their mutual articulation takes place through the acting, etc.,[2] (*NS,* VI. 36).' One way of dealing with this is to treat one or the other statement as an interpolation. Another way is to consider whether the difference is only apparent and the statements are basically reconcilable. I think that it is possible to reconcile these statements.

If the second quotation is the right view, then both the *bhāvas* and the *rasas* are articulated through the actions—bodily, verbal and natural reactions. Since they mutually articulate each other, it would be wrong to say that the *bhāvas* articulate the *rasas,* and not *rasas* the *bhāvas;* in fact both would be articulated together. However, it would appear that the articulation of the *bhāvas* makes possible the articulation of the *rasas.* But this is an appearance only, because the sentiment is a matter of the pattern of *vyabhicārīs,* and a *vyabhicārī* by itself may belong to one or more *sthāyī.*

However the pattern of *rasa* is larger, and the pattern of *bhāva* is smaller and part of the larger one. Thus as a matter of fact the presentation of *rasa* can not take place without the presentation of *bhāva*, whereas it would appear that the *bhāva* can be presented without the presentation of the *rasa*. But that is only appearance; really as we have seen the articulation of the *bhāva* and the *rasa* must go together.

(2) *Rasa and sthāyibhāva*: While speaking of *rasa* and *sthāyibhāvas*, we spoke of the *Rāmāyaṇa* depicting the *karuṇa rasa*, also of the *Rāmāyaṇa* presenting the *sthāyī bhāva* to the spectator. Do these two, *rasa* and *sthāyī bhāva* have the same meaning or different meanings, and if the latter what is the relationship between the two? In this context the first three verses of the seventh chapter of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* are very useful.

> 'With actions—speech, bodily actions and natural reactions—the *vibhāvas* and the *anubhāvas* create a meaning which is understood that is *bhāva*' (*NS*, VII. 1).
>
> 'With actions—speech, bodily actions and natural reactions—that which manifests the feeling in the mind of the poet, is *bhāva*' (*NS*, VII. 2).
>
> 'Since they bring about the *rasas* which are associated with a variety of actions, therefore they are known as *bhāvas*' (*NS*, VIII. 3).

The play presents a meaning, presents a meaning intended by the author, and presents a meaning which produces the experience of *rasa* in the audience. It is important to see that the word '*bhāva*' is explained in three ways—with reference to the work of art, with reference to the author and with reference to the spectator. It is important to see that not even two of them can exist independently of the third. The author may claim to have produced a work of art; but without a spectator, present or future, the claim remains a claim. The spectator may be moved by an author to an experience, but without a work of art made up of actions, etc., it is not an experience of *rasa*. Some situation may produce an experience say of compassion in a spectator, but this is not experience of *rasa* unless there is an

imaginative awareness of a pattern of *vibhāvas*, *anubhāvas* and *vyabhicārī bhāvas* to produce such an experience.

In a similar way it will be possible to explain *rasa* with reference to all the three—the work of art, the author and the spectator. In so far as this is so, *rasa* may be attributed not only to the spectator but also the source of experience in the spectator—the author and the work of art. Therefore one may attribute both *sthāyī bhāva* and *rasa* to a work of art, the former as belonging to the work of art as such, the latter belonging to it in relation to the spectator. Similarly, one may say that the spectator has the imaginative awareness of the pattern of *bhāvas* in his experience of *rasa*. Thus the question whether only *sthāyī bhāva* belongs to the work of art or both *sthāyī bhāva* and *rasa*, does not introduce a distinction of fundamental importance for the understanding of *sthāyī bhāva* and *rasa* in a work of art.

(This certainly has a bearing on the controversy about whether beauty is in the work of art or in the mind of the spectator).

(3) *Sthāyī bhāva and Vyabhicārī bhāva*: From the account we have given of the relationship between the *sthāyī* and the *vyabhicārī*, one can ask : is the distinction between the two one of degree or one of kind? On the face of it, since a *sthāyī* can also be a *vyabhicārī*, the distinction may be said to be of degree, and not of kind. However, there are several considerations to show that the difference between the two is one of kind. It is true that a *sthāyī* can be a *vyabhicārī*, but it is also true that a *vyabhicārī bhāva* cannot be a *sthāyī bhāva*. It is true that a particular *vyabhicārī bhāva* may also be dominant in the depiction of a *sthāyī bhāva*; e.g., *nirveda* (feeling of indifference) may be dominant in the depiction of *vipralambha śṛṅgāra*. However this cannot become the *sthāyī bhāva* of the work of art because *nirveda* is a *vyabhicārī bhāva* also of *śoka* and *śānta*. Thus the characterization of a work of art in terms of *nirveda* is incomplete. For completeness one will have to mention the *sthāyī bhāva* to which the *nirveda* belongs.

But what does it mean to say that *nirveda* gives us incomplete characterization, whereas the *sthāyī* gives us a complete characterization? In considering this question, it is useful to look at the last few verses of *NS*, VI. Here, each of the various *rasas* is divi-

ded into classes; for example, it is said that heroism can be in respect to charity, or war or the performance of one's duty. Or it is said that compassion may be aroused when there is loss of *artha* or of *kāma* or of *dharma*. In many of the cases where the divisions do not directly refer to the *puruṣārthas*, it is not illegitimate to consider the possibility of division of the *rasa* according to the pursuit of the different *puruṣārthas*. For example, if in the pursuit of any one of the *puruṣārthas*, one succeeds in attaining one's goal, the *sthāyī bhāva* will be one of enjoyment and *rasa* will be happiness—a feeling of success and fulfilment. Or suppose that there are serious difficulties in the way of the attainment of one or more of the *puruṣārthas*, but one is confidently trying to overcome them, then we have the *sthāyī utsāha,* and the *rasa* will be heroism. Or suppose, in the pursuit of *puruṣārthas* one uses means which are unrelated to the goals, (consider many situations in Hindi films), we have amusement. To take the last example, when one adopts wrong or evil means in the pursuit of a *puruṣārtha*, e.g., murder to gain wealth or abduction to gain a woman, we have the *sthāyī* of disgust and the *rasa* of aversion. Thus vulgarity can be there not only in the pursuit of sexual pleasure in general, but also in the pursuit of *artha* or *dharma* or *mokṣa*. It is important to note that compassion presupposes undeserved suffering. In the case of suffering, we do not have compassion; there is perhaps pity, or even satisfaction at wrong being punished.

The foregoing kind of understanding of *rasa* in relation to *puruṣārthas* is not illegitimate. In fact, its legitimacy can be supported in various ways: (1) There are several references to the *puruṣārthas* in the commentaries on the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. (2) The discussions of the legitimacy of the *śānta* (pp. 18-20 in 'The Number of Rasas' by V. Raghavan) also bring out the relationship between the *rasas* and the *puruṣārthas*. (3) The *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* avowedly depict the pursuit of the *puruṣārthas*.

This association of *rasas* and *sthāyī bhāvas* with the *puruṣārthas* brings out that a work of art presents man in the pursuit of his goals, not any goal—but a legitimate goal legitimately pursued. It cannot be legitimate unless it is legitimately pursued; it cannot be legitimately pursued, unless it is legitimate. Thus the work of art presents man in his essential nature, presents man in a certain

sort of completness or in the context of a complete understanding of man.

But does not the presentation of *nirveda* give us an understanding of a complete human situation? In fact some of the modern novels have attempted to depict this with great skill and at great length. To deny completeness to it, is to do so by definition. I think it would not be right to make this merely a matter of definition. In fact, the reason for the incompleteness of *nirveda* is that it leaves open the possibility of raising such questions as: What is the source of *nirveda*—a great calamity (*karuṇa*), self-realization (*śānta*) or a long separation from the beloved (*vipralambha śṛṅgāra*)? It is the answer to these questions that makes our understanding complete. In the case in which we have attributed *nirveda* to one or the other *sthāyī*, we do not need any further explanation; we do not ask why, because of the calamity there is a feeling of indifference. We have reached an explanation in terms of essential human nature. (We may still ask the question, but we can also see that it is a different sort of question).

But does not *nirveda* constitute a complete human response in the modern context? It is the response of utter helplessness—an inability to find meaning in life beyond this indifference. And as we have said, some of the best literature of modern times is the expression of this helplessness.

Suppose we say that here we have completeness of response, the question will be how this response is related to the achievement of legitimate human goals. Could we say that here we have a failure to achieve a goal and, therefore, the *rasa* evoked will be *karuṇa*? But here we do not have so much a failure to achieve a goal as the failure to find a goal. Hence, anxiety is, as it were, the *sthāyī* of such a situation. And this is failure to relate to the essential or true human nature.

But does not *nirveda* give us a complete understanding of the human situation in the modern context without there being a specific ground for *nirveda* ? Is this not a moral sensibility ? Is it not a moral sensibility full of seriousness and authenticity ? Is it proper to deny the title of moral sensibility to such a presentation?

Now we are faced with two problems in our understanding. One is, are *puruṣārthas*, on the one hand, and the authenticity and

sincerity on the other, two alternative moral goals, or are they really at bottom one? The second question is: is it necessary to think of the goals as moral goals? Does this not mix up or confuse aesthetic and ethical considerations?

Let us take the second question first. Surely a work of art is what it is because it gives us aesthetic pleasure and not because it teaches morality. But could there be a work of art without a moral force? Does not a work of art on account of its aesthetic appeal exert also a moral force? (Is this not the kind of reason which led to Plato's mistrust of art? The question whether there could be an art which will be purely art without any such explicit or implicit exhortation needs to be considered). But even if this is so, is this moral force relevant to its being a work of art? And if it is relevant, what is the difference between a work of art and a moral discourse? (This is indeed a difficult question. I shall not go into an account of different kinds of moral discourse, but only briefly indicate some important points of difference.)

A moral discourse presents to us principles to which our conduct must conform if it is to be right. This is done directly and with greater or less justification being given for such principles. A work of art presents situations and characters and these have a moral significance, but they are not presented directly. They are presented as a human possibility and this enriches our understanding of what it is to be a human being. This is not all, a work of art does this in a form which has an appeal of its own. Thus a work of art needs both a moral significance and a form. Without the form, a work of art is likely to degenerate into moralising without anything to support it; and without the moral significance, a work of art is likely to become mere craftsmanship which merely entertains and pleases, even if it does not present a false understanding of what it is to be a human being.

Now let me go on to the kinds of questions that arise from the consideration of the other question: do both of the two alternative moral standards give us an understanding of what man is? Are these two accounts reconcilable? If they are not, can there be two legitimate views of man? Or, is one of them right and the other wrong? One could say that one of them upholds harmony, sacrificing dynamism and creativity, and the other upholds creativity and dynamism at the cost of harmony. But the ques-

tion will be whether harmony without creativity is not dead uniformity; and creativity without harmony is not purposeless activity, fretting and fuming?

I wish I could go into these questions instead of merely posing them. However, even the raising of these questions serves a purpose—making the theory of *rasa* a participant in contemporary thought and understanding, and not merely a historical phenomenon. This was my main purpose and not to advocate the theory of *rasa* as giving us a superior understanding of art.[1]

| STHAYĪ BHĀVAS (these can also be *vyabhicārīs*) | THEIR RASAS |
|---|---|
| 1. *Rati* (love) | 1. *Śṛṅgāra* (erotic) |
| 2. *Hāsa* (laughter) | 2. *Hāsya* (comic) |
| 3. *Śoka* (sorrow) | 3. *Karuṇa* (pathetic) |
| 4. *Krodha* (anger) | 4. *Raudra* (furious) |
| 5. *Utsāha* (enthusiasm) | 5. *Vīra* (heroic) |
| 6. *Bhaya* (fear) | 6. *Bhayānaka* (terrifying) |
| 7. *Jugupsā* (disgust) | 7. *Bibhatsa* (odious) |
| 8. *Vismaya* (astonishment) | 8. *Adbhuta* (marvellous) |

OTHER VYABHICĀRĪS

9. *Nirveda* (discouragement)
10. *Glāni* (weakness)
11. *Śaṅkā* (apprehension)
12. *Asūyā* (envy)
13. *Mada* (intoxication)
14. *Śrama* (weariness)
15. *Ālasya* (indolence)
16. *Dainya* (depression)
17. *Cintā* (anxiety)
18. *Moha* (distraction)
19. *Smṛti* (recollection)
20. *Dhṛti* (contentment)
21. *Vrīḍā* (shame)
22. *Capalatā* (inconstancy)
23. *Harṣa* (joy)
24. *Āvega* (agitation)
25. *Jaḍatā* (stupor)
26. *Garva* (arrogance)
27. *Viṣāda* (despair)
28. *Autsukya* (impatience)
29. *Nidrā* (sleep)
30. *Apasmāra* (epilepsy)
31. *Supta* (dreaming)
32. *Vibodha* (awakening)
33. *Amarṣa* (indignation)
34. *Avahittha* (dissimulation)
35. *Ugratā* (cruelty)
36. *Mati* (assurance)
37. *Vyādhi* (sickness)
38. *Unmāda* (madness)
39. *Maraṇa* (death)
40. *Trāsa* (fright)
41. *Vitarka* (deliberation)

THE SATTVAJA VYABHICĀRĪS

42. *Stambha* (paralysis)
43. *Sveda* (perspiration)
44. *Romāñca* (horripilation)
45. *Svarabhaṅga* (change of voice)
46. *Vepathu* (trembling)
47. *Vaivarṇya* (change of colour)
48. *Aśru* (weeping)
49. *Pralaya* (fainting)

VYABHICĀRĪS OF THE RASAS

1. *Śṛṅgāra*: all except 6, 7, 15, 35
2. *Hāsya*: 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 22, 29, 31, 34
3. *Karuṇa*: 9, 10, 16, 17, 25, 37, 39, 48
4. *Raudra*: 4, 5, 12, 13, 22, 23, 24, 26, 35
5. *Vīra*: 5, 4, 12, 13, 20, 23, 24, 26, 33, 35, 36, 41, 44, 45
6. *Bhayānaka*: 39, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47
7. *Bibhatsa*: 6, 13, 27, 30, 38, 39, 37
8. *Adbhuta*: 8, 18, 23, 24, 25, 42, 43, 44, 49

THE DETERMINANTS, THE CONSEQUENTS AND THE *Vyabhicārīs* OF THE *Karuṇa Rasa*

| *Determinants* | *Consequents* | *Vyabhicārīs* |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Affliction | (1) shedding tears | (1) indifference |
| (2) Separation from dear ones | (2) lamentation | (2) langour |
| (3) Loss of wealth | (3) dryness of mouth | (3) anxiety |
| (4) Death | (4) change of colour | (4) yearning |
| (5) Captivity | (5) drooping limbs | (5) excitement |
| (6) Flight | (6) being out of breath | (6) delusion |
| (7) Dangerous accident | (7) loss of memory | (7) fainting |
| (8) Any other misfortune | | (8) dejection |
| | | (9) illness |
| | | (10) inactivity |
| | | (11) insanity |
| | | (12) fear |
| | | (13) indolence |
| | | (14) death |
| | | (15) paralysis |
| | | (16) change of colour |
| | | (17) weeping |
| | | (18) loss of voice |

| *Vyabhicārīs of Karuṇa* | *Determinants* | *Consequents* |
|---|---|---|
| Indifference | reduced to poverty, getting insulted, abuses, wrathful, beating, loss of beloved, knowledge of ultimate truth. | wrapping, deep breathing, deliberation. |
| Indolence | natural lassitude, sickness, satiety, pregnancy. | aversion to work, lying down, sitting, drowsiness, sleep. |
| Anxiety | loss of wealth, theft of a favourite object, poverty. | deep breathing, sighing, agony, meditation, thinking with downcast face, sleep. |
| Yearning | separation from beloved, remembering the separated ones, sight of garden. | sighs, desire for lying down, drowsiness, sleep. |
| Excitement | portents, wind, rain, fire, running about of elephants, very good or bad news, adversity. | sadness, looseness of limbs, surprise, distraction of mind, loss of facial colour. |
| Delusion | accidental injury, sickness, remembering past enmity, adversity, fear, agitation. | want of movement, excessive movement of a limb not seeing properly, reeling. |
| Weariness | travelling a long way, exercising of limbs. | massage of limbs, sītkāra, slow gait, deep breathing, contraction of mouth. |

V. Y. KANTAK

# THE *NĀṬYAŚĀSTRA*: DRAMATIC MODE
## In the Light of the Western Concept of Drama

To try to probe the basic conceptual patterns implicit in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the Aristotelian *Poetics* is a convenient starting point, a sort of jumping-off plank for a risky dive into the *Nāṭyaśāstra's* dark serene waters. For one thing, the conceptual tools we use today are themselves derived from Western tradition of thought largely initiated by Plato and Aristotle. Again, the Aristotelian *Poetics* offers a kind of model—in many ways a sharply contrasting formulation in reference to which those features that are peculiar to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* view could be set off and identified.

Such at least is the hope. In actual practice we are so used to measuring everything by the Aristotelian yardstick, as though what he said is the irreducible idea of drama anywhere, anytime, that we are inclined to treat the curious *Nāṭyaśāstra* conception as a somewhat childish freak or aberration from the norm—the Aristotelian prototype. Didn't a Berriedale Keith commiserate Kālidāsa for his incapacity to rise to the heights of Tragedy, and lament the lack of true characterization and psychological plausibility in Sanskrit drama? It is as though we commiserated Sophocles for being but a feeble approach to Shakespeare and condoled with Aeschylus for his total want of interest in the Elizabethan psychology of the Malcontent-Hero.

I said 'we' advisedly. It is not only the Western scholars; our Indian scholars, too, see it the same way—more or less. *They* have some excuse, we have none. Or, maybe, recognizing a generic difference, at best we take recourse to some attractive, emotionally satisfying generalization. This, for instance: In the Aristotelian and Western dramatic role, it is 'action' with its spell-binding, energetic quality that has the primacy; while in Bharata it is 'sentiment'—that inadequate and somewhat obscur-

ing translation of *Rasa*. And such a juxtaposition may be taken to reflect the essential masculinity and femininity of the respective cultural moulds in which the two kinds of drama germinated. There certainly is an important point and an element of truth in such a comparison—except perhaps for the unfortunate implication of inferiority ascribed to the feminine! (These hidden traces of male chauvinism may be galling. But there it is. It is somehow easier to imagine godhead in terms of an old Wizard or Joker—or may be, Emily Dickinson's 'Papa above'—than as *Śakti* imaged in the full force and splendour of a woman's personality...) All this because understandably it is so difficult to enter into the spirit of that older form, to let our awareness flow into an older groove of feeling, get under the skin, so to say, of another generation distant in time though not in consanguinity, to be able to give that form some definition.

To aid such an effort we may begin by inquiring: What is involved in the prestigious Aristotelian concept? First of all, it is possible to say that Aristotle's approach to poetry and art in general is of greater universal validity than his approach to drama. The latter, as was but natural, was heavily biased by a closeness to Greek practice, to Tragedy especially—that great artistic achievement of the Greek spirit. Consider his characteristic insight into the sources of poetry: 'Poetry in general seems to have sprung from two causes, each of them lying deep in our nature.... Imitation is one instinct of our nature. Next there is the instinct for harmony and rhythm.' In those words we sense at once the great initiator of psychology and the positivistic sciences.

Now, that is a statement about art in general and not only about the nature of drama. These two impulses—to imitate and to seek harmony and rhythm—are at the basis of drama at the one end, and music (what he calls 'flute-playing and lyre-playing') at the other. If imitation has to be true of drama and poetry as well as music it can only be interpreted in a broader sense than what is implied by 'mimicking' or 'copying'. What is implicit in Aristotle's statement is that a certain kind of imitativeness or 'histrionic' sensibility lies at the heart of the activity called art and that such a sensibility combines variously with rhythm, language and harmony. Imitation is used here, it would seem,

more in a metaphorical sense to describe the activity of the creative imagination, the kind of 'imaging' that is involved in all art—something like the force of the analogical activity, the seeing of one thing in terms of another which is at the root of simile and metaphor, or, in an extended sense, what is described as imagery.

As to imitation in drama, we can only liken it to a kind of 'feigning' or 'playing'. Such a 'playing' we observe also in the play of kittens or in the primitive man's hunting dance or war-dance. The actions of hunting or of heroic defiance in this mimic form become more rhythmic and harmonious than those of real fighting or hunting. So the two instincts that Aristotle identifies work together in art. In this sense, too, we are all actors 'imitating' when we feel our way histrionically through the tangle of personal relationships; it is the kind of 'imaging' which helps us gain direct perception of a man's real motives discounting his rationalizations, may be.

At any rate, Aristotle's pronouncements have a philosophical basis which critics like Paul Ricoeur have tried to spell out: *Mimesis* is to be understood only in the context of 'making'; it is operative in forming, creating a plot, a work of art. It is the structure of plot that constitutes mimesis. It presents men as acting, as alive. Nature is not something inert; and poetry's power is to make contact with 'Being' as such. That is its ontological function in which dormant potentiality of existence appears as blossoming forth, what is indicated by the Greek word '*phusis*'—the active principle of the growing things in nature. *What is imitated is lifelikeness*, the potentiality of 'becoming' that is implicit in a thing, in *phusis*. Drama imitated not the particular forms of behaviour in a possible actual situation but the power that works behind such forms. It is like a creeper putting forth new leaves as it grows and moves along, or like a character expressing itself in new behaviour-patterns in the process of becoming.

This inner philosophic impulsion of the original mimetic concept is found glanced at variously in the text of the *Poetics* itself, as in those celebrated passages which tell us that for the purpose of poetry, 'a likely impossibility is preferable to an improbable or unconvincing possibility.' Or that in character-drawing and plot-making, 'one should keep an eye always on the *necessary* or the *probable* so that whenever such-and-such a personage says or does

such-and-such a thing, it shall be the probable or necessary result of his character.' And also that an event following another shall be 'the necessary and probable consequence thereof.' We are aware of that background also in passages like: 'That is why poetry requires a man with special gifts of nature and temperament or else a touch of madness or *Ekstatikoi*'.

But what actually mimesis has come to mean in practice is something rather different. It is a misfortune of criticism that the same term 'imitation' has to be used to describe this generic or primary sense of 'imaging' in art and the more literal sense of a realistic 'mimicking' of action upon the stage. The difficulty arises when we ask: What is the distinctive feature of drama that sets it off from the other arts? Since imitation in the metaphorical sense is common to all arts one is *likely to assume* that imitation in the more literal sense of a realistic mimicking is the differentia of drama—a mimicking that has a proper regard for those norms of time and place, of circumstantial and psychological plausibility, that we assume to be true of our everyday existence. This is not always a matter of conscious adoption of dogma. But some such bias, some such covert limitation, has conditioned the dramatic practice and the critical tradition Aristotle inspired. And this seems largely true of the entire course of the Western dramatic tradition taken as a whole.

So that what we mean by Western mimetic drama and its broad typical features—for which also there is warrant enough in Aristotle—is something like this: 'Western drama shows human activity in the complex, ambiguous, movement of character; it presents a focal point in actual time, with men caught up in life's fitful fever, and images the tumult of life. The mimetic concept naturally stresses action, character, situation, and above all *conflict* which it makes the fulcrum of the action. And the dramatic structure is addressed to realising that prime aim, making plot the soul of Tragedy, for instance, as Aristotle says it is. All is governed by plausibilities of psychology and situation. In general, it images the urgency of the living process as we know it, and Time—the linear, irreversible notion of time—is essential to it...' For all of which there is adequate basis in Aristotelian mimesis though its broader aspects and possibilities may not have received the same attention.

Not that Western drama is all of a piece, nor that the force of the original concept is entirely lost. Greek drama itself, whether Aeschylian or Sophoclean Tragedy or Aristophanic Comedy, was far from realistic in technique. The lyrical and ritual elements had a dominant role; character interest in the modern sense was nugatory, and in some respects it had vital similarities with the Eastern theatre. None the less, it did lay down the pattern of the Western mode. Psychological realism and realism of situation was already making itself felt in Euripides, and the future flowering of the drama of individual character was already foreshadowed in his work.

Again, in another sense the original philosophical verve is reflected in that magnificient, dynamic tradition of drama that the doctrine created. The constantly changing and restless theatre activity of European and American drama to which the great renaissance Shakespeare as well as the modern Strindbergs, Pirandellos, Brechts and Becketts belong...reflects and bodies forth same sense of a 'becoming' inherent in Aristotelian thought. And it does so both synchronically and diachronically, so to say, constantly evolving new elements of structure within the drama itself and giving rise to vogue after vogue of fresh theatre styles in its long history. Innovatory developments like the drama of existentialist inspiration or the Theatre of the Absurd testify to its vitality. There has also been much straining at the Aristotelian leash and some peeping over the fence at the Eastern modes adapting them to new uses as in the poetic plays of W.B. Yeats ....and so on. All the time, its foundation and artistic concerns, however, have remained firmly Aristotelian and mimetic. The rallying cry voiced in the Western theatre from time to time has been, 'Back to the Aristotelian dictum: all arts are modes of imitation and what drama imitates is actions of men.'

Consequently, the Aristotelian view of drama does not appear wide enough to include dramatic modes that developed independently in the East—whether Indian, Japanese or Chinese. There is never any ambiguity or doubt about the distinct character of the Eastern drama; a cursory comparison of a Sanskrit play or a *Noh* play with a Western classic brings out the great gulf that separates the two traditions. The difference is reflected in the theoretical formulations based on these diverse arts—as is obvious if we set

Aristotle's *Poetics* beside Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* or *The Kadensho* of Zeami, the foremost exponent of the *Noh*. The very notions of 'action' and of Time seem to alter themselves. How does one go about indicating that difference? It is so like the difference that Yeats had perceived—between the West's *penchant* for numbers, calculation, measurement, as opposed to those 'Asiatic vague immensities' that characterize the East.

To begin with, we note that the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is at once a treatise on dance and drama as a composite art with music as a natural ingredient. There is this peculiar integration of music, poetry, dance and drama that calls for attention. Dance and drama are indeed so close that the root-word for drama नट् is supposed to be the Prakrit form of नृत् which means to dance. The common point between them, between नाट्य and नृत्य is *Abhinaya—āṅgika, vācika, āhārya* and *sāttvika*, which makes them near synonymous terms in Sanskrit usage, despite the technical difference. Indeed, dance and drama are so intimately fused that in texts like *Harivaṁśa* and *Karpūramañjarī* the expression used is 'dance a drama' to mean 'perform' a play.

The nature of that integration is a major departure from the Aristotelian conception. True, in the Greek drama, the chorus with its combination of dance and lyric performs a role, but it is a separate entity with a definite function. The choric and the dramatic elements retain a certain identity severally. Even when Nietzsche visualised Tragedy as primarily Dionysian (in his essay 'The Birth of Tragedy') he emphasizes the dialectical relationship that must exist between the action and the dialogue (the Apollonian element), on the other. In the Indian dramatic concept the component of dance and lyric does not in any sense *subserve* the drama. The whole structure is poetically conceived in quite a different way, the dance and lyric being essential ingredients of its texture and technique.

This synthetic conception is the first premise of the Sanskrit theatre. As has been said often, the staging of drama in Asia is primarily the problem of enacting poetry. It follows a poetic logic of its own rather than of an action-packed story and has therefore little use for the unities of time, place and action. These would be powerful aids if the purpose were to emphasize the physical features of the action in the enactment. Whereas, in the

Sanskrit theatre, poetry retards the normal speed of action from deliberate purpose and induces a 'static' mood. This is actually drama's strength rather than weakness because the surplus time thus released is needed to enlarge and draw out a movement, a gesture —allow it time to register— so as to bring the dominant sentiment to a ripe fullness. As a *Noh* critic might say: 'In this onstage leisure the artistic purpose of a scene blooms,' so that action may disappear in the wings while lyric takes over and finely elaborate the *Rasa*. Poetry helps the actor to enrich his action, to extend its essential quality beyond what a straight enactment of the scene itself could produce.

(This adaptation of 'recitative' as part of drama, it appears, has had a curious progeny; it has given rise to that song-deluged hotch-potch which has become the hallmark of the popular film today and draws enormous crowds!)

When translated in terms of the Western mode of presentation, this purpose is lost, and a heavily drenched scene like Śakuntalā's departure from *Kaṇvāśrama* in the Fourth Act, simply becomes ridiculous in its poetic prolixity. But for the Indian concept the essence of the drama lies in this function of poetry and not just in the mimic rendering of the story sequence. This is action, not merely recitative: 'One should take good care of words', says Bharata, meaning poetry, 'for these are the body of the dramatic art (*nāṭya*). The gestures, costumes, make-up and temperamental (*sāttvika*) acting merely clarify the meaning of words.' Speaking of *abhinaya* he says, वाचि यत्नस्तु कर्त्तव्यो नाट्यस्यैषा तनुः स्मृता । अङ्गनेपथ्यसत्त्वानि वाक्यार्थंव्यञ्जयन्ति हि ॥ (*NS*, XIV. 2. G. O. S. ed., Vol. II, p. 220). There is never any ambiguity or doubt about this claim to poetry as action on the stage. *Nāṭya* is both *dṛśya* and *śravya*, being a *dṛśyakāvya* or 'visual' poetry. That was the original supplication of the Devas to Prajāpati, क्रीडनीयकमिच्छामो दृश्यं श्रव्यं च यद्भवेत् । (*NS*, I. 11.G.O.S. ed, Vol. I, p. 10).

This, then constitutes 'action' on the stage. action impregnated with poetry and so 'subtilized' —not merely the motives and activities of men and the events that result from them. It is a kind of quintessential action that has been extracted from the chaos of raw life. Indeed, Asiatic drama, Japanese *Noh* particularly, might seem to subtilize action to the point of spiriting it away. In the

*Noh*, action is so purged of its physical accoutrements that it assumes the nature of a stance – action happening out of time in the stillness of the soul. What the *Noh* presents is the flower, the *yugen*, the final bloom of the tree of action—not the bole and the roots and the worms! As a *Noh* commentator might put it : 'It is the reduction of life of man to a single fulcrum, poised at the point where the now and the hereafter touch and where the problem of the tortured spirit has a single solution......The actual events are faded and distant, only the essence of the experience of living remains.'

Now Sanskrit drama does not go that far; it shows more regard for plot though, like the *Noh*, it is essentially the depiction of emotional states rather than the unfolding of a plot. And though the *Noh* derives its notion of action from *Zazen* (or Zen Buddhism) specifically, one can recognize its blood-relationship with the Indian notion. The distinctivenesses are only family differences.

When therefore we place the celebrated Aristotelian dictum—to the effect that drama is an imitation and what it imitates is men in action—by the side of corresponding pronouncements in Bharata, we notice a superficial resemblance but the hidden differences are deeper and more profound. Aristotle's *Poetics*, Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* and Zeami's *Kadensho* may use approximately the same term—'imitation'. But there are always tell-tale modifications. Zeami would add, for instance, that in imitation there should be a tinge of the 'unlike', for if imitation be pressed too far 'it impinges on reality and ceases to give a lifelikeness.' Which is likely to sound like an incomprehensible paradox to an ear attuned to the Western aesthetics of Imitation.

Similarly in Bharata, though imitation be rendered as a 'mimicking', 'imaging', or 'representation' there is always one small detail, some qualification which puts us wise of the immense submerged difference. The most prominent of these *Nāṭyaśāstra* statements runs: 'Drama is a representation of the state of the three worlds.' The phrase used is *bhāvānukīrtana* or *avasthānukīrtana*. It is further clarified that it is not exclusively a representation of man's activities but those of gods and demons as well: देवानां चासुराणां च राज्ञामथ कुटुम्बिनाम् । कृतानुकरणं लोके नाट्यमेतद् भविष्यति ॥ (*NS*, I, 118, G.O.S ed., Vol. I., p. 42)

This is to say '*nāṭya*' is not a reflection or a camera-like imitation of man's secular existence. The world it reflects has already been impressed with imagination and peopled with its products ! It is nothing short of the state of the three worlds that drama imitates. The term, 'the state of' is itself intriguing. 'Drama' says Bharata, 'becomes instructive to all through the actions and states that it images and through the sentiments arising out of them.' Always, the emphasis is on 'states' or 'sentiments', *avasthās* or *bhāvas*—the essence, the 'being'—the word *Bhāva* itself being derived from *bhū-bhavati* or *bhāvayati*. And why *trailokyāvasthā*, the three worlds being *svarga-martya-pātāla*—the heavens, the domain of death (our world), and the nether world? The point is, an imitation purporting to represent the state of these can hardly be contained in a realistic presentation of our quotidian existence.

If one may interpret this somewhat freely (without fear of inviting ridicule!) the explication may run on the following lines:

> 'The fiction must take into account our actual world's commerce with the other two. It must be shot through with them, that is to say, the drama should adequately project these all-important linkages and affiances. So that the dramatic structure so evolved may be like a graph of the deepest insights and beliefs of the race, of the community—its *Weltanschauung* as it were—in the same way as the structure of a Greek Tragedy is seen to be the diagramatic representation of the Greek view of man's destiny. In the Indian case such a structure conforms neither to western Comedy nor Tragedy but has elements of both. And its characteristic poise and resolution is miles away from the crisis-ridden drama of the western tradition. What is firmly eschewed is an exclusive preoccupation with the three-dimensional reality, the world of man's activity in the raw, in favour of a scrutiny, a refined sense of the *state*, an apprehension of its *Rasa*, its true being in the light of the whole, of all the three worlds !'

Then again, there is this most important factor to be allowed for: That the *trailokyāvasthānukaraṇa* has to be rendered through *līlāṅgahārābhinaya* itself makes for a difference. And further, it has to be *mūrtimat* and *sābhilāṣa*. Each such qualification inter-

poses a distance between the common notion of drama and Bharata's highly individualized concept. At any rate, there is little doubt that the *anukaraṇa*, *anukīrtana* or *anukṛti* of Sanskrit dramaturgy is basically a difierent concept from Aristotelian imitation. It is more closely related to concepts we meet with in Indian treatises on the *Śilpaśāstras* where the term acquired a peculiar nuance. There, imitation has to do with the twin canons of *sādṛśya* and *pramāṇa*. We are told, in art, all forms are ideally determined with regard to *sādṛśya* and *pramāṇa*—likeness and ideal proportion. *Sādṛśya* (or synvisibility, the term Ananda Coomaraswamy uses) usually translated as likeness or imitation is more accurately described as correspondence of formal and representational elements in art. So that *sādṛśya* is more properly conceived of not in terms of a *simulacrum* but rather in terms of an analogical similitude of the kind whose stock example in Sanskrit Rhetorics has always been: 'A young man is a lion.'

In the Indian concept, the likeness of anything to its artistic representation cannot be the likeness of nature but analogical or exemplary or both. Here again, what is imitated is the subtle essence of a thing as we apprehend it with a kind of total apprehension and not only by the senses. *Sādṛśya* is further qualified by *pramāṇa*, has to be 'moulded' by right proportion and design ...so as to give us natural shape and ideal proportion, all in one. Imitation in the Indian conception is conditioned by properly conceived design, which means design woven out of highly conventionalized forms and symbols as in the case of Sanskrit drama or Japaneese *Noh*—the *Noh* being actually the most formal and least naturalistic drama in the world.

I have always thought there is much wisdom in that story of the First Performance, the theme being the defeat of the *daityas* by the gods—given at Indra's Banner Festival—which became a fiasco. The first shot at *Imitation* seems to have caused trouble. In Bharata's witty account: The gods were greatly pleased and began to shower gifts on the performers. The *daityas* it seems at first behaved handsomely but when it came to killings and mangling of bodies, could no longer swallow the affront, but got up in rage shouting: 'We shall not tolerate this performance' and instigated the '*vighnas*' to break it up...Was it that the *daityas* took the 'imitation' too literally? Or that the inexperienced

performers grossly overdid it? In any case, it did seem to be an object lesson how *not* to take 'imitation'. And was not Bharata deliberately prefacing this parable to the discussion to guard against a possible misunderstanding of 'imitation' upon the stage? Anyway, he slyly keeps quiet on that question!

Whether Bharata meant it as a warning against a patent misunderstanding or not, the little fable does throw light on how to take 'imitation'. Firstly, the *anukaraṇa* being in the form of dance, *abhinaya*, poetry and music a certain distancing from actuality is already interposed and asks for a corresponding response. One would do it wrong by reacting, as the *daityas* did, unappreciative of the artistic distance. Unless the performers themselves bungled it and lapsed into an uncouth mimicking of an actual happening...and enjoyed themselves...at the expense of the poor *daityas*! Secondly, we note that the context in which Bharata first uses the term *anukaraṇa* (through his mouthpiece Prajāpati) concerns the *scope* of drama rather than the technique. The *daityas* when hauled up had roundly charged Brahmā with *partiality*: 'The knowledge of the dramatic art introduced by you for the first time at the instance of the gods puts us in an unfavourable light. This is done by you for the sake of the gods. This ought not to have been done by you who are the progenitor (Prajāpati) of the world, from whom came alike gods as well as *daityas*.' And Prajāpati has a hard time getting round them by declaring that drama is meant for all! He assures them that drama is the imitation of the state of the three worlds, and not biased towards the gods alone. The emphasis is on the content... on *what* drama imitates. Whereas, in the Aristotelian phrase, 'imitation of an action' the emphasis falls on the technique, the *how* of it.

Once the basic distinction is grasped the consequential details become comprehensible. If drama of the mimetic concept aims at presenting men in action, the *Nāṭyaśastra* mode aims at '*Rasotpatti*', the evocation of *Rasa*. The drama has to be an adequate vehicle, a structural matrix in which the *Rasas* can naturally arise and flourish. This is reflected in all its features, for instance, in the classification of the hero-figure. The Aristotelian notion of men better or worse than we are as fit subjects for tragedy and comedy respectively is part of the imitative

concept: the doctrine of the "tragic flaw" rests on a similar foundation. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* scheme of classification is based on a radically different set of assumptions and needs. The heroic types have to be such as to serve the central purpose: heroes can be either *dhīrodātta*, *dhīralalita*, *dhīraśānta* or *dhīroddhata*. But these imply a concept of man already moved out of his native matrix of animality. An initial comment is implied. Life has been searched and man viewed in terms of higher categories measured by a sophisticated standard.

The Aristotelian prescription that the tragic hero be better than ourselves doesn't legislate on the nature of the difference. In the entire Western tradition this distinction is seen to be not necessarily one of moral or spiritual excellence. To the renaissance hero for instance, we can only ascribe a certain kind of *Virtu* as the irreducible requirement, what is in the main a form of vitality, capacity for physical and mental striving, whether for good or evil. The prescription provides merely the basis for the creation of value, not value achieved. Which leaves the field open for a multifarious individuation in character-portrayal. In the Indian concept, the hero has to be heroic in the normative sense. He is *dhīra* (self-contained) first of all and further characterized as *udātta* (magnanimous), or *lalita* (vivacious), or *śānta* (poised and calm), or *uddhata* (vehement). These are not human types in the ordinary sense, but rather types of perfection possible for men with different elements in their composition as nature has mixed them. Moreover, the main object is not the individualising of personality but the creation of an artistic whole, a design woven out of various sentiments into a music-like composition. Character in the Western sense is strictly incidental to it.

Similarly, there is basic divergence in the requirements of plot. To Aristotle the dramatic poet is primarily a maker of plots; he accords it the central place pronouncing it the soul of Tragedy... and so on. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* emphasis is clearly elsewhere. The Aristotelian notion of a beginning, middle and end leaves the door open to innumerable possibilites of different kinds of actions, men, motives, and events, variously patterned—as the course of Western drama has shown. Whereas in Bharata the plot must necessarily describe a pre-determined arc—and all is mandatory. There are the five formal elements—*Bīja*, *Bindu*, *Patākā* and so

on, and there are the *Sandhis*. But what is of special significance, there are the five *avasthās* or stages of action. In Bharata's words: 'These are set afoot by those that strive after a result.' The plot must always be structured : *ārambha, prayatna, prāptisambhava, niyataphalaprāpti, phalayoga* — beginning, effort, hope-despair, uncertainty-certainty and finally success. That is to say, the plot has to be a paradigm of human effort—striving and enterprise that, after initial foiling, necessarily ends with success; that is mandatory.

One may well ask: Why should the plot-line follow only the paradigm of effort leading finally to success? Why not ill-success? Failure? Catastrophe? Why not death? Why, if not because, only in such a firm scaffolding of plot-pattern could there be full scope for a development of the *Rasas* which is the main aim ? Elements of conflict, of tension are indeed present but they are not made the fulcrum of the drama as in the West. The prescribed plot is the natural receptacle for drama's main purpose and it in effect rules out Western Tragedy, at least in the plot-action-oriented sense. Rather, it takes us beyond the point where action is designed as a sort of therapy of the soul—as it is in Tragedy — and presents instead a poise already reached. Sanskrit drama has splendid tragical scenes but no tragedy as such. Of suffering and graciously endured grief there is hardly any equal to it anywhere. But no tragedy in the strict sense. As someone said, a tragic close to a Sanskrit play would be as curious as a Christian Passion Play only as far as Good Friday omitting the Resurrection! The Sanskrit play is addressed to a different goal, a different kind of perfection.

To go back a little, we saw that the concept of 'action' in Aristotelian thought is governed by the norm of psychological plausibility and plausibility of situation. As the *Poetics* puts it: 'Whenever such-and-such a personage says or does such-and-such a thing it shall be the probable or necessary result of his character, and whenever such-and-such an incident follows upon such-and-such another it shall do so as the necessary or probable consequence thereof.' Action in a Sanskrit play, too, has a certain psychological and situational plausibility, but it works within a controlled structure. The characters of the hero and heroine, and so on, are already placed in well-defined categories and the situa-

tion is such as affords the best scope for the delineation of the precise *Rasa* that is to achieve full force and felicity.

So that, though the mimic theatre's character-circumstance interaction is essential to Sanskrit drama there is a basic difference. The quality of action is not specifically addressed to reflecting the actual clash of wills and motives, the tumultuous cross-currents of emotion and action, circumstantial conflict. ...and violence and death. All this passes through a sieve, as it were, and what we have is a form of quintessential action addressed to the purpose of *Rasa* creation and enjoyment. So that questions like : How was Durvāsā's curse reasonable? Why was the innocent Śakuntalā's repudiation justified ? Wouldn't a *dhīrodātta* hero (Duṣyanta) behave better than he does? And wouldn't he be inviting a tragic outcome if he didn't? And thus foreclose a happy resolution? ...strictly speaking do not arise. (They would be vital and disturbing problems in a drama set in a tradition of 'action' differently conceived.) In the *Nāṭyaśāstra* tradition the resultant dramatic form would be of a radically different order. It has been said that its closest analogue in Western life, thought and art is not so much their classical drama as their classical music—that the structure of a Sanskrit play, the way it develops the theme through elaborate conjunctions, is symphonic. Which comes closest to hitting the mark !

Hence its defining quality, as some perceptive critics like Henry Wells have recognized, can only be adequately stated as a spiritual equilibrium. Its movement is circular rarher than progressive. It does not even move from evil to good, from insufficiency to sufficiency. And that is because its true Time is circular and the keynote, *renewal.* On the other hand, the linear, irreversible process of Time that commits the individual life to its one-and-only-chance is the very heart of the *tragic* experience. Indian art moves in a more relaxed ambience of time. The plays end neither in death, as in Tragedy—except for Bhāsa's play *Karṇabhāra*—nor in marriage, as in Comedy, but in reunion which is the characteristic close. We think at once of *Śakuntalā*, *Svapnavāsavadattā*, *Mṛcchakaṭika*, *Uttararāmacarita* ...... and so on. Their true Time is circular, meaning that the psychological dimension in which the characters move and have their being is larger. The world of terrestrial time is bursting at the seams... and here's a world in

which a Durvāsā's curse can operate, where the last scene presided over by sage Kāśyapa can take place in which Duṣyanta could honestly end his *Bharatavākya* with 'May the self-existent God, from future transmigrations save my soul.'

It is hardly possible to consider the distinction this dramatic *genre* has reached without reference to the concept of *Rasa* and the intricate machinery and logistics of its production Sanskrit dramaturgy is busy with. It is, in many ways, the heart of the matter. The *Rasa* theory put forward by Bharata and later elaborated by critics like Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta has acquired a bewildering wealth of comment. The term itself has a wide range of connotations from the plain alcoholic Soma juice to the metaphysical *Absolute Brahman. Raso vai saḥ.* Most of these however, cluster round two poles : (1) *Rasa* meaning 'sentiment' or emotional state with all its human concomitants and proliferations, and (2) *Rasa* meaning the essence of a thing, the 'being' (for which also there is warrant in the word for emotion, *Bhāva* from *bhū-bhavati*). The truth lies somewhere between the two; and perhaps nothing said about *Rasa* is authentic that does not share some of both these nuances.

What is pertinent here is that the theory is strongly spectator-oriented. *Rasa* refers at once to the totality of elements that compose the 'organic' unity of the artefact and the aesthetic experience aroused in the appreciator. The *Rasa* is tasted by him; the terms used being '*rasana*', '*carvaṇa*', '*āsvādana*'. A play is '*rasotpatti*' and '*rasāsvādana*' both at the same time—thus joining the act of artistic production with the act of enjoyment. (In Western criticism, it has been observed, there is no such term which indicates both at once—the term 'artistic' having basic reference to source, and the term 'aesthetic' to response). Secondly, the theory lays special emphasis on the distancing of the aesthetic experience from life-emotions with their practical pressures, which incidentally would seem to discount any form of 'realism' as such. Abhinava's commentary on the *Nāṭyaśāstra* vigorously discusses—in the sixth chapter—whether *Rasa* is dependent on *Bhāva* or *Bhāva* on *Rasa*... and in such a manner as to effectively dispose of the Clive Bells and Roger Frys of modern criticism who ascribe to *aesthesis* the status of a separate emotion.

What is still more important is that the *Rasa* experience is

always marked by a rare unparallelled serenity. All *Rasas* are tasted in a state of perfect tranquility... which owes to the withdrawal of the ego from its practical behests. So much so that a lively debate has raged whether *Śānta Rasa* should not be regarded as the *Mahārasa* ! What is involved is no ordinary allaying of emotional tumult, but is rather the core of the aesthetic response—which is clear from the fact that the action-filled *Mahābhārata* is regarded as the finest example of the *Śānta*, as does Ānandavardhana in *Dhvanyāloka*.

The great premise behind all this is the poised state of the soul conceived of as central to all art activity. The consciousness gains a composure, a repose, a *saṁvidviśrānti*, freed from the grossness of appetite and agitation (*Kāma* and *Krodha*). The imitation of action so conceived, if not wholly foreign to the Aristotelian conception, is certainly not the vivifying factor in the drama of the West as it is in Sanskrit plays. We do these plays wrong to judge them as though it were the same. (There is however an important caveat to be entered).

In this context, when we talk of Indian dramaturgy's rejection of 'realism' the careful distinction Bharata makes between *lokadharmin* and *nāṭyadharmin* styles of representation assumes significance. What exactly is the difference? Why is it so elaborately worked out as to suggest a matter of high importance? It is common to regard *Lokadharmin* drama as 'realistic' and *Nāṭyadharmin* as 'conventional'—in the sense, the former imitates natural modes of speech, behaviour, flow of action, while the latter weaves an artistic design using tacitly accepted devices and conventions. The former is 'natural' and the latter 'artificial'—in the manner all art is. A later reference to the two styles says just this succinctly : स्वभावो लोकधर्मी तु विभावो नाट्यमेव हि—with *vibhāva* standing for a deviation or distancing from *svabhāva*. But since both are art, *svabhāvo lokadharmī tu* might seem to stress psychological plausibility which would bring that style closer to the Western concept.

Another interpretation of *Lokadharmin* and *Nāṭyadharmin* is the distinction between the popular and the elite theatres—between the loose, variegated folk drama forms and the strictly designed, precept-oriented classical drama. From the viewpoint of technique, the opposition is clearly that between straight-forward

realism and a representation that is necessarily 'symbolical' in some degree. That is central to the discussion which begins by explaining that the *laukikī* style is :

स्वभावभावोपगतं शुद्धं तु विकृतं तथा । लोकवार्तक्रियोपेतमङ्गलीलाविवर्जितम् ।
स्वभावाभिनयोपेतं नानास्त्रीपुरुषाश्रयम् (*NS*, XIII. 71-72. G.O.S. ed., Vol.II, p.214)—And that the *Nāṭyadharmin* style differs from this, goes beyond popular tradition or history or what is common and familiar. And that more especially it employs *līlāṅgahārābhinaya* whereas the former is *aṅgalīlāvivarjita*. The text then goes on to explain the various stage devices and conventions such as the Zonal Division or *kakṣāvibhāga* which is a very important feature of Eastern drama that reached a very high degree of refinement in this context that is especially crucial :

लोके यदभियोज्यं च पदमत्रोपयुज्यते ।
मूर्तिमत्साभिलाषं च नाट्यधर्मी तु सा स्मृता ॥
(*NS*, XIII.75 G.O.S. ed., Vol. II, p. 216).

Though the matter or theme is chosen from what is normally prevalent in the world, the form that is given to it has to be *mūrtimat* and *sābhilāṣa*, has to achieve the shape of a concrete corporeal image such as art creates. Further, such an image should be imbued with the artistic purpose implicit in it. (Ghosh's translation assumes *sābhilāpa* in the place of *sābhilāṣa* but this latter seems the more accurate version). In other words, though a certain degree of realism is natural, what distinguishes the *Nāṭyadharmin* style is the treatment which has to be 'symbolical'.

It looks as though the author is at pains to fix the precise quality that separates the high drama of classical tradition from folk forms. What is behind all this anxiety? There probably is a lurking feeling that though the splendid masque-like Sanskrit product is preferred by men of refinement, what pleases the masses of people is something different. That, side by side, there was an equally, or may be, more powerful practice that was in full swing among the common people. And that fact had to be recognized. (Is it that drama is, after all, *Prākṛta*? Has to be close to *Prakṛti*? One wonders.) This must give pause for reflection.

Both styles share common roots and are addressed to the evocation of *Rasas*, and so on; but one feels there is more involved. *Lokadharmin* drama would naturally stress the treatment of the

common, secular aspects of life. At its widest, such drama might embrace the whole range of theatre that presents man's circumstantial and appetitive life in all its heights and depths. In which case, it would appear that the entire Aristotelian tradition is *Lokadharmin*! Was Bharata then hinting at other possibilities, even anticipating developments like the Western drama? Again, was he guarding against the fate that overtakes all elite classical drama wherever it has to stand up to a rival popular theatre? That's how the Elizabethan Masque died, while the crude people's theatre to which a Shakespeare belonged had a lusty growth.

In any event, this might well be an instance of *Bharata's* catholicity and open-mindedness that is evident everywhere. He never makes the mistake of equating the common with the low in quality by definition. True, the normal expectation is that the *Nāṭyadharmin* stands for the pure, the ideal, and the *Lokadharmin* for the impure and corrupt form. But though the distinction is carefully drawn there never is any suggestion that the *Lokadharmin* style be regarded as inferior or less important. Indeed, an aspect of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* that surprises us is the way the word *loka* occurs repeatedly and with various nuances. One constantly lights on statements like these:

लोकस्वभावं संप्रेक्ष्य नराणां च बलाबलम् ।
संभोगं चैव युक्तिं च ततः कार्यं तु नाटकम् ॥
तदेव लोकभाषाणां प्रसमीक्ष्य बलाबलं ।
कुर्यान्नाटकम्*
लोकस्वभावसंसिद्धा लोकयात्रानुगामिनः ।
अनुभावा विभावाश्च ज्ञेयास्त्वभिनये बुधैः ।

(*NS*, VII.6, G.O.S. ed., Vol. I, p. 348).

Whatever is लोकस्वभावानुगत is to be accepted as a norm; it would seem since लोकस्वभावानुकरणच्च नाट्यस्य सत्त्वमीप्सितम्. The common man and his experience seem to be recognized as the force that resides at the heart of drama. Even in that highly caste-organized society, the account *Bharata* gives of drama's origin declares that the '*Pañcama*' Veda was meant for all categories — particularly those who were denied access to the Four. That is how towards the close Bharata has a set of verses

**NS*, XIX. 149, 152, G.O.S. ed., Vol. III, p. 81.

roundly declaring that what succeeds with the common people is the law for this art, that they be the soul of drama:

लोकसिद्धं भवेत्सिद्धं नाट्यं लोकात्मकं तथा।
नानाशीलाः प्रकृतयः शीले नाट्यं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥
तस्माल्लोकप्रमाणं हि विज्ञेयं नाट्ययोक्तृभिः ।

(*NS*, XXV. 121, 123. G.O.S. ed., Vol. III, p. 286-87)

What all this comes to is the recognition that we have developed drama in a certain form which is naturally sacrosanct for us, being the most intimate expression of our culture, and of ourselves, but that such a form however is no *absolute*. Within the tradition itself we may be as prescriptive as we like, but there is the danger of over-doing it. Precept-oriented art runs the risk of dying of over-refinement, of anaemia ... when it must run back to common life for transfusion of a fresh blood. Is Bharata saying, there is danger in too much elitist conceptualization? That the truth is, art is simpler, more existential, may be? Anyway it is healthy to recognize, there can be other lines of development, as great. That somewhere sometime, new forms will arise since *kālo hyayaṃ niravadhir vipulā ca pṛthvī.* What is constant is that it is a *trailokyānukaraṇa*, as it is in a Shakespeare; as it is in a Kālidāsa. And the only thing common to them is a certain structure of feeling. Above all, what it all means is a deep humility before Art whose roots are embedded in an infinitude capable of multifarious manifestations. As though *Ūrdhvamūlamadhaḥsākhāmaś-vatthaṃ prāhuravyayam* true of the present context as well!

Finally, then talking of conceptual structures implicit in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, can we point to one that is an over-all indigenous feature, and something that qualifies our habitual response to the art of the drama, in fact, to all art as such? That isn't easy to state. But could we say with some certainty that such a feature is the need to relate our aesthetic perceptions and emotions *vertically* right down to the 'wholeness' of our religious outlook? Rather than be satisfied with viewing a situation *horizontally* confining attention to some layer of that experience? So that nothing is considered worthy as art unless it reflects this inner bias and becomes, as it were, illustrative of it in some way?

Eric Auerbach, the classical historian, speaking of the representation of Reality in Western literature (which is the theme of

his well known book, *Mimesis*) pointed out that in the Middle Ages there was such a vertical reference which gives rise to what is called the 'figural' style. But that, gradually, the old ceremonial conception of life was supplanted by a historical conception, and the representation of Reality in Western literature became more and more realistic. And, as we should expect, Drama became more mimetic. Could it be that something similar is happening to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* dramatic concept in today's India? That our theatre is at the cross-roads and is shuffling between Aristotle and Bharata? What is fairly obvious is this: The theatre *is* in labour, and we await a mutation!

K. KRISHNAMOORTHY

# THE CONCEPTUAL STRUCTURE OF 'DHVANI' IN ĀNANDAVARDHANA'S *DHVANYĀLOKA*

Ānandavardhana's primary objective in his *locus classicus* of Sanskrit Poetics, viz. the *Dhvanyāloka* (c. A.D. 850) was to provide a philosophically acceptable theory of essence of poetry as envisaged by men of taste.

Literary theorists prior to him had offered valuable insights about different aspects of beauty in literature. They had also lighted upon the truth that all poetic expression is a kind of deviation (*vakrokti*) from the mode of normal linguistic discourse. But they set out analysing the deviant ways of communication as so many modes of *alaṅkāras* instead of offering any theory underlying the nature of all poetic language. Their analysis of the linguistic structure of poetry (*racanā* or *rīti* or *saṅghaṭanā*) went a little deeper, in as much as it brought them closer to the issue of poetic qualities (*guṇas*) arising for the first time in the creative use of language to communicate or evoke emotional feeling-shades. But they could not establish any inherent relation between an emotional state and a poetic quality, as they ended up their analysis with the superficial view that qualities were imbedded in the structure of the phonetic-cum-semantic complex itself which was poetic language.

Though *rasa*, established by Bharata as the essence of drama, was admitted as important in poetry by literary theorists, they could only accommodate it as one of their *alaṅkāras* or *guṇas* only; they could not assign it any paramount status higher than that of *alaṅkāras* and *guṇas*.

It is indeed true that there was a philosophy of linguistic usage postulated by the early literary theorists; but it was a philosophy common to poetic as well as scientific and scriptural use of language. Hence the *Ālaṅkārika* could adopt without any demur the conclusion of the *Tārkika* and the *Mīmāṁsaka* that linguistic dis-

course had just two distinguishable levels of meaning—(1) primary (*mukhya*), sanctioned by convention and (2) secondary (*amukhya* or *gauṇa*), arising from the variant motivations of a speaker or writer to use language loosely in order to achieve specal emphasis of his point. The first is the referential use of language; while the second may be regarded as the metaphorical use in a broad sense, to include not only transference of meaning (*upacāra*) based on similarity (*sādṛśya*), but also on relations other than similarity, which we might broadly term 'metonymy'. The first is the direct use of language called *abhidhā*, while the second is the indirect use of language, termed *lakṣaṇā* which includes metaphorical transference (*gauṇī*) as well as other types of semantic compression. This two-fold theory of semantics is common to all Indian thinkers, including literary theorists, up to the time of Ānandavardhana.

The literary theorists were thus constrained to hold beauty as an objective quality instanced in poetry by the configuration of *alaṅkāras* and *guṇas* and any learned man who could identify them was qualified to appreciate poetry, and to explain his appreciation in terms of the *alaṅkāras* and *guṇas* noticed by him. Recognition of *guṇas* and *alaṅkāras* by virtue of a proper training was all that was expected of a critic; and this was something which could be acquired by scholars, one and all. Thus literary taste was not any unique innate endowment like a poet's creative genius, but an acquisition anyone could attain with industry.

After Ānandavardhana's deeper analysis of the problem, all these ideas of his predecessors appeared crude and superficial; they seemed to fail to apprehend the inmost secret of poetic appeal or *rasa*. Appreciation of *rasa* was all too rare and was open only to the privileged few, gifted with a refined sensibility by birth. These he called by the name *sa-hṛdayas* or 'those with kindred hearts' because they could respond fully to the heart-throb of a poet which found expression in his poetry. Other names for *sahṛdaya* are *rasika* and *rasajña*. One who is blind to the aesthetic experience of *rasa* in poetry is no literary critic, however learned he might be in the diverse branches of learning. In this new approach of Ānandavardhana, we see for the first time poetry

valued as an art, and not as a unique supplement of science. To understand poetry means to understand its *rasa*.

With this shift in emphasis regarding the 'soul' of poetry as *rasa*, objective beauty of poetry becomes but a means subserving the end of *rasa*; and when snch exterior beauty in poetry attracts all attention towards itself and does not lead one up to the beauty of *rasa*, we have only instances of non-poetry (*a-kāvya*), which arrests our attention by their exterior fripperies. It is like a painting which excites us by its glaring colours, though it lacks in the vital essence of life represented. Hence it is also called *citra-kāvya*.

In poetry proper or true poetry, Ānandavardhana realised fully the vital animation provided by the emotional content described in all its variety including states of mind (*citta-vṛtti* or *bhāva*), abiding and shifting (*sthāyin* and *sañcārin*), their rise (*udaya*) and calming down (*praśama*), their semblance (*ābhāsa*) as well as commixture (*sabalatā*). This rich world of poetic theme is significantly termed by him '*rasādi*', instead of the single word '*rasa*'.

What we have to note in the conceptual background of Ānandavardhana's theory of *dhvani* is this basic acceptance of all the earlier theorizings in India not only about linguistic discourse in general, but also about the aesthetic categories of *alaṅkāra*, *guṇa* and *rīti*, and most importantly, the findings of Bharata on the seminal nature of *rasādi* in dramatic as well as poetic subject-matter, the end-value or *prayojana* of which is nothing but the aesthetic rapture of the man of taste.

Unfortunately, many modern writers are misled by the technical terms used by ancient writers, since they are more often than not polysemous. '*Artha*' may mean a 'thing,' a 'meaning' or an 'end-value.' When *rasa* in general is said to be *kāvyārtha*, it does not mean either a thing or a meaning, but only 'aesthetic rapture', the end-value. When a particular variety of *rasa* is mentioned, it means only the theme or subject-matter. These nuances of intended meaning in the *Dhvanyāloka* are often missed by writers who adhere to interpretational catchwords.

Ānandavardhana subjected all the streams of thought in the diverse disciplines to a re-appraisal, and integrated them in a wonderful synthesis to serve as the basis for the structuring of

his new theory of literature which was at once more integral, penetrative and perceptive. The name for this new theory is *Dhvani* and it has at least five dimensions—all geared to the hard core of *rasa*. While the writers before Ānandavardhana were more or less deductive in their approach, Ānandavardhana was inductive. He found that the old categories of aesthetics could not explain the entire beauty of vast epics like the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. At the most, they could highlight some external beauties of thought and expression; but they could not touch the essence. Hence he had to put the horse before the cart, before stating his theory.

Since *rasa* in its abounding richness can be found only in a whole work, we have to be satisfied with even dim flashes of it when we take single verses as examples of *rasa*. Ānandavardhana does not commit the mistake of picking and choosing some verses as instances of *rasa*, since that would mean that others in the work would not be good instances of *rasa*. The truth is that every analysable part, however microscopic, must have its relation positively pointing to *rasa*. That is why, we might say that all positive illustrations in the *Dhvanyāloka* are examples of different manifestation of *rasa*; otherwise they would cease to be poetry and the theory would not be universally valid.

But for practical purposes of understanding, one must start with some example. By universal concensus, *śṛṅgāra* or love in its two aspects of 'union' and 'separation', is the *rasa par excellence*. Bhaṭṭenduraja, the teacher-poet of Abhinavagupta, has composed two self-contained poetic gems (*muktakas*) to help understand the nature of *rasa* as constituting the essence of poetry. He describes how when Kṛṣṇa in the Vṛndāvana stepped into youth, all the youthful Gopikās therein were so much fascinated and drawn to him that they betrayed tell-tale indications—physical and psychical—of their love-infatuation. In technical language, we have in the verse only a description of the *vibhāvas* or determinants and *anubhāvas* or consequents of the abiding emotion (*sthāyibhāva*) of *rati* or love. Even the word love is not stated. But a man of taste will rise into raptures by imagining with the poet the depth of love which has possessed the personalities of the Gopīs towards Kṛṣṇa. The drift of the stanza is:

> Their eyes have all lost the quality of steadiness, concerned all the time to snatch his sight in stealth. Their bodies are getting thinner day by day, even like the stalk of lotus, cut down and withering in the sun. Their cheeks have become paler than the blades of dry grass. Such is the state to which the entire community of Gopī-maidens is reduced even as Kṛṣṇa stepped into youth !

For one who cannot respond to the intensity of love in this stanza, it cannot have any poetic value. There is no recognizable figure of speech beyond two common-place similes; nor any highly striking poetic quality. But a man of taste would hail it as a poetic gem embodying *rasa* of *śṛṅgāra* or love.

The second illustration offered by Bhaṭṭendurāja also relates to the life of Kṛṣṇa. After all his love-affairs in Vṛndāvana, he departs to Dvārakā permanently. How much the pangs of separation are felt by the Gopīs, represented by Rādhā, is the subject of the second verse. Even a small reed which remains bent by the touch of Kṛṣṇa's playful hand during water-sports is enough to excite the pangs of Rādhā to such a pitch that she cannot but burst into tearful song. And the song is so piteous that it makes even the aquatic animals in the deep waters of the river Yamunā to start crying.

Here again the *rasa* of love-in-separation evoked in the *rasika* is entirely suggested by the *vibhāvas* and *anubhāvas*—here Rādhā and her sight of a reed associated with the intimacies of Kṛṣṇa—and is not stated in any prosaic way. Though the word *utkaṇṭhayā* occurs in the verse, it only names the emotion of deep pangs otherwise suggested, and is not itself responsible for evoking that feeling in the reader.

With these examples, we see how the only way a poet can make *rasa* felt by a *rasika* is by describing its associates and corollaries, and not in any way stating it. Ānandavardhana shows at length how neither the primary denotative function of language (*abhidhā*) nor the secondary figurative function of language (*lakṣaṇā*) are adequate to serve the purpose of evoking *rasa* which is the *sine qua non* of poetry. He also considers the other possibilities that might be suggested to explain this—viz., (1) the power of speaker's purport or intent (*tātparya*) commu-

nicable in a sentence, (2) the meaning arrived at inferentially (*anumāna*), and (3) implication logically conditioned (*arthāpatti*) —and finds them all equally deficient in explaining the aesthetic value of *rasa* in poetry, since they all are concerned with non-poetic linguistic discourse. Enjoyment of '*rasa*' is no intellectual process, but a spurt of emotional response—ecstatic in nature.

This review of the explanations of poetic or aesthetic value by earlier theorists leads Ānandavardhana to propose his own original explanation *per se*, viz. '*Dhvani*.' And its acceptance in principle by all later writers in Indian poetics is an index of its soundness.

As hinted earlier, '*Dhvani*' is a term with a vast spectrum of meaning. When it refers to *rasa* in the singular as what is suggested by a poem (*vyaṅgya*), it means the aesthetic value or joy of the tasteful and sensitive reader. When it refers to *rasas* or *rasādis* in the plural, it means the emotion or feeling-content described in the poem. When it refers to the suggestive items (*vyañjaka*) in a stanza like syllable, word, affix, sentence, passage, episode, whole work, etc., it invites us to shift our attention from the suggested to the suggestive element. Again, the surface meaning (*vācya*) of a poem may itself, in its turn, become suggestive of another. This possibility makes *vyañjaka* twofold, viz. i) sound and ii) sense. Thirdly, *Dhvani* can also mean the linguistic process (*vyāpāra*) of suggestion evidenced in all good poetry. Finaly, the poem, which is a summation of all these can also be termed *dhvani*, which then signifies that it is a poem of the highest order of excellence. These multiple significations of *dhvani*—which are classified as five—are all basic to a proper understanding of poetry, both from the end of the poet and that of the *rasika*.

We saw that in its final significance, *dhvani* involves value-judgement. This is indeed an essential aspect of Ānandavardhana's new poetics. n earlier poetics, we have no clear-cut aesthetic norms or guidelines to judge a poem as good or bad, better or best. Their doctrine of *doṣa* or blemish is either logical or grammatical or ethical, but not aesthetic, strictly speaking.

Ānandavardhana takes pains to show that the evocation of *rasa* might even set aside rules of logic, grammar and ethics and yet be valuable. At the worst, a *rasa* might be reduced into a *rasābhāsa* when (ethical) impropriety is involved. If Rāma's love

for Sītā might instance *śṛṅgāra-rasa* in the hands of a good poet, Rāvaṇa's passion for Sītā would instance *śṛṅgāra-rasābhāsa.* But both are equally aesthetic to the *rasika* at the time of enjoying the poem; it is only at a later stage that he might dismiss it as inappropriate and ridiculous. Nonetheless, it has the aesthetic quality, may be of bathos or *hāsya.*

The five-dimensional *Dhvani* theory is essentially required to show how the poet has succeeded in arranging all his material with the whole and sole purport of inducing *rasa* or *rasādis* in his reader. In the nature of things, poetry does utilize the two ordinary functions of linguistic usage but does not stop at that level; it converts them into a jumping-off ground as it were for the play of *dhvani* or infinite suggestion. The suggested *rasādis* may vary from one *rasika* to another depending on his sensibility and taste; though there is a modicum of commonness in aesthetic value. On the other hand, the paraphrasable meaning of a poem is invariably one and the same to all readers—*rasikas* and *arasikas* alike. So the latter is the body (*śarīra*) of poetry, with all its embellishments of *alaṅkāra* and *guṇa*; it can never be its soul or *ātman.* Only *dhvani* or '*rasa*' or '*rasādi*' can be the soul of poetry.

Once it is accepted that the suggested content alone is the soul of poetry with outer layer of stated content as its *śarīra* or body, the idea of *dhvani* can be stretched a little further to explain the beauty of folk-poetry, proverbs, jokes and so forth wherein the suggested content may not be *rasa* or *rasādi* strictly; but something more prosaic. This is the province of *vastu-dhvani.* When a beloved's 'no' means 'yes' to the lover, we have an example of *vastu-dhvani.* If a poet so uses language that his simile is not openly stated but suggested in a devious way, it becomes another class of *dhvani,* known as *alaṅkāra-dhvani.* Thus suggested content can assume the three-fold form of *rasa, vastu* and *alaṅkāra,* though the pride of place in poetry belongs to the first only, viz. *rasa.* It is by extending its connotation that *dhvani* becomes a principle capable of explaining other possible forms of beauty also in a poem, though they are not as powerful or seminal as *rasa.*

The simultaneous admission of both stated and suggested meanings in a poem involves the problem of literary judgement or aesthetic rating. It is the business of the *rasika* to distinguish

both and to decide in each given instance, which of the two is more beautiful. In case the suggested is more beautiful than the stated, it is a pure example of *dhvani*-poetry. Contrariwise, if the stated is more beautiful than the suggested, it is an instance of subordinated suggestion or *guṇī-bhūta-vyaṅgya-kāvya*. But it should not be forgotten that the second also is beautiful in its own way, though the way is not identical with the beauty of the *dhvani-kāvya*. Thus the *raison d'etre* of beauty in both these types of poetry is the presence of the principle of *dhvani* only—predominantly in the former, and subordinately in the latter. Thus all the poems regarded as beautiful by *alaṅkāra*-theorists will be admitted as beautiful by Ānandavardhana also by showing that they are having subordinated suggestion. A sound philosophy of poetic beauty is thus arrived at. It can be summed up in an aphoristic form: '*Kāvyāsyātmā dhvaniḥ*.' The creative vision of the poet also is adequately accounted for in this theory, since there can be no creative upsurge from a poet who is not suffused with *rasa*.

It should not be mistaken that *dhvani* is a kind of poem different in kind from that of the *guṇībhūta*. Ānandvardhana makes it very clear that not only in a poem as a whole, but a part of a poem or even verse or its part—these two varieties of *dhvani* and *guṇībhūta-vyaṅgya* can co-exist. It is this which makes the theory fool-proof; and even the worst critics of Ānandavardhana—Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka and Mahimabhaṭṭa, to cite only two—had to agree on the fundamental philosophy that *rasa* alone is the soul of poetry and they could only suggest a different nomenclature like *bhāvaktva*, *bhojaktva* and *anumiti* to the term *dhvani* employed by Ānandavardhana in deference to the great grammarian-philosopher, Bhartṛhari.

The *Dhvani* theory is a sound aesthetic principle to explain beauty not only in poetry whose raw-material is language, but also other arts like music, painting and sculpture. No other aesthetic theory in India is as comprehensive as *Dhvani*. I have desisted from citations at length, as I have written extensively on this subject elsewhere.

R. B. PATANKAR

# MADHUSŪDANA SARASVATĪ'S *ŚRĪ BHAGAVAD-BHAKTIRASĀYANA**

The purpose of this paper is to give a brief outline of *Bhakti-rasāyana* and to discuss, in the context of the book, two theoretical issues.

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī belonged to the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century. He is very widely known as the writer of the *Advaitasiddhi*, a work in the *Kevalādvaita* tradition. Very few people know that he has written a book on *Bhakti-rasa*. He is believed to have been a friend of Tulsidas, the well-known writer of the *Rāmacarita-mānasa*. He is said to have written verses in praise of Tulsidas. This might lead one to presume that he was led to write a book on *Bhakti-rasa* because of the impact of the *Bhakti* poetry of Tulsidas and his other contemporaries. But it is possible that this belief is ill-founded. That he was influenced by the strong current of the contemporary *Bhakti* movement cannot be denied. But, on the other hand, it needs to be noted, that he neither mentions Tulsidas nor does he use any of the verses of Tulsidas in the course of his discussion of *Bhakti-rasa* anywhere in the book. He has made ample use of the *Bhāgavata*; he relies on Sanskrit but not Hindi works; secondly, the book is devoted entirely to the *bhakti* of Kṛṣṇa and not that of Rāma.

*Bhakti-rasāyana* consists of three *Ullāsas*. The first, and the longest *Ullāsa* contains the author's own commentary along with the *Kārikās*. The second *Ullāsa* is shorter than the first, and the third is even shorter than the second. The author has not supplied his own commentary in the second and the third *Ullāsas*.

*Yativara Śrī Madhusūdanasarasvatī-viracita *Śrībhagavad Bhaktirasāyana: Saṁskartā* Janārdanaśāstrī Pāṇḍeya, Varanasi, Dvitīya Saṁskaraṇa, 2033. For page references this edition has been used.

At the beginning of the first *Ullāsa* the author states his aim in writing the book: he proposes to undertake a philosophical examination of *Bhakti-yoga,* both separately and also in the context of the nine *Rasas.*

Actually, *Bhakti-yoga* can be discussed adequately even outside the context of the nine *rasas*. But the author's decision to discuss it in this context indicates his intention to discuss *Bhakti-yoga* and *Bhakti-rasa* simultaneously, as though they were identical in nature.[1]

The First *Ullāsa,* entitled *Bhaktisāmānyanirūpaṇam,* discusses the general nature of *Bhakti.* We are told that *Bhakti* is the mental state which is liquefied on account of *Bhagavaddharma* and which has fully assumed the form of Kṛṣṇa.[2] *Bhagavaddharma* has been explained in the commentary as hearing (about) the goodness/greatness of Kṛṣṇa; on the authority of the *Bhāgavata* we are told that whether this is done intentionally or not makes no difference.[3] The rest of the *Ullāsa* discusses various topics like the three essentials of *Bhakti* (viz., *dravatva, dhārāvāhikatva, sarveśaviṣayatva*), types of *Bhaktas,* the need for *Bhaktiśāstra,* the eleven degrees of *Bhakti,* pleasureableness of *rasas,* etc.

The second *Ullāsa* discusses *Bhakti* in detail. *Bhakti* is the stable assumption of the form of Kṛṣṇa by the *bhakta's* mind; however, owing to the difference in the causes of mind's liquefaction *Bhakti* appears in different forms. With *Bhakti* in the centre the author then discusses *Rati, Krodha, Bhaya,* and other *Bhāvas;* and he classifies them keeping in mind their potential for being transformed into *Bhakti.* The writer is aware that Bharata and others have given *Bhakti* the status of *bhāva* and not that of *rasa.* He accepts their view in the context of other deities; but he claims that *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti/Kṛṣṇa-rati* belongs to a different category altogether.[4] Janārdanaśāstrī Pāṇḍeya, the editor and commentator, says on the same page that according to the *kārikās,* where this position has been stated, *Rati* in relation to other deities may be called *Bhāva*; an individual *jīva* being the creation of *Avidyā* does not possess pure *sattva* and consequently does not exhibit pure joy (Ānanda); but Lord *Kṛṣṇa* is the ultimate spirit, and is of the nature of the highest joy. The above consideration. therefore, does not apply to him.

The third *Ullāsa* discusses *Bhakti* in the context of the *Rasa*

theory. In his presentation of the theory the author has given very prominent place to pleasure, the obvious reason being the relation between joy and the soul as conceived by the *Vedāntins*.[5] In the first *kārikā* it is asked 'what is *Rasa*? What is that which serves as the foundation of *Rasa*? What makes it an object of experience? What is the nature of this experience?[6] The second *kārikā* gives an answer to the first question in the traditional language of *Vibhāvas* etc., and need not, therefore, detain us. The third *kārikā* is very interesting because it answers the second question about the foundation of *rasa*. It says that pleasure, being the nature of *Ātman*, does not need any foundation beyond itself. The argument seems to be that *Rasa* is of the nature of pleasure, and pleasure is the nature of *Ātman*. Hence pleasure, and consequently *Rasa*, does not need any foundation beyond itself. At least that is the interpretation given by Janārdanaśāstrī Pāṇḍeya who has written the *Vivṛti*. The writer of the *Vivṛti* points out that according to the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* 'Rasa is That. By obtaining That he becomes happy.' For him the meaning is clear: *Rasa* is *Ātman*; He becomes happy by obtaining *Rasa*. *Rasa* is *Ātman* of everybody; and Ātman does not need any foundation beyond itself. The *śruti* has made this amply clear by repeatedly saying '*Neti, Neti*'.[7] It is worth noting that the word *Rasa* is taken to have the same meaning in the literary context as it has in '*Rasa* is that' (*Raso vai saḥ*).

The above brief outline of the book will serve our purpose. For, it is not our aim to study in detail what Madhusūdana Sarasvatī has to say about *Bhakti*. Our purpose rather is to discuss two questions which arise in the context of *Bhakti-Rasa*. One is about the relation between *Bhakti-yoga* and *Bhakti-Rasa*; and the other is about the relation between *Bhakti* and *Kevalādvaita*.

As we have seen above, Madhusūdana Sarasvatī does not appear to distinguish between *Bhakti* and *Bhakti-Rasa*. To regard them as identical is to abandon one of the criteria for distinguishing the *Rasa* experience from experiences of other sorts that we have in life. The seriousness of this consequence will become clear to us if we consider the different interpretations of Bharata's *Rasa-Sūtra* offered by aestheticians from Lollaṭa to Abhinavagupta. Lollaṭa regards *Rasa* as intensified *sthāyī bhāva*; for him

the distinction between the two is that of degree alone. Śaṅkuka is the first aesthetician to treat the difference between *Rasa* experience and *sthāyī bhāva* (or any everyday experience) as that of kind. *Śaṅkuka's* view is usually presented as follows:

Actually the *sthāyī bhāva* is located in the characters; what the spectator becomes aware of is the actor's *sthāyī bhāva*, the actor's *sthāyī bhāva* is an imitation of the character's *sthāyī bhāva*; it is given a different name '*Rasa*' because it is an imitated *sthāyī bhāva*. We become aware of the imitated *sthāyī bhāva* through the process of inference; we infer the *sthāyī bhāva* from the actions, etc. of the *Vibhāvas*, which are available for sense-perception. The relation between the real *sthāyī bhāva* and the imitated *sthāyī bhāva* is similar to that between a real horse and a horse in a painting. The experience of seeing a horse in a painting is different from the types of experience we are accustomed to: *samyak, mithyā, sādṛsya, saṁśaya*. It is in this sense that it can be called *sui generis*. Mammaṭa describes it as '*samyak-mithyā, saṁśaya-sādṛśya-pratītibhyovilakṣaṇa citraturaga-nyāyena...*'

I have maintained elsewhere[8] that the official Sanskritist tradition has not done adequate justice to Śaṅkuka. In the attempted refutation of Śaṅkuka by Bhaṭṭa Tauta, the discipline which governs debates among Sanskritists appears to have been properly followed; this discipline prescribes that every disputant should take into account all the possible interpretations of the opponent's position. Tauta's treatment of Śaṅkuka's position is, according to the above standard, fairly exhaustive, for he has taken into account as many interpretations of Śaṅkuka as appeared to him possible. But one interpretation appears to have escaped his attention. He has missed the point that to see a horse in a painting is an example of what Wittgenstein would call 'seeing as.' We get a good example of the application of Wittgenstein's theory in the concept of 'aspection' which Aldrich has developed in his *Philosophy of Art*. The logic of the concept 'seeing a play' necessarily involves the adoption of a certain epistemological stand, viz. the resolution to see an actor as a character. To see a painting is also governed by an identical resolution. Two answers seem possible to the question: what is it 'to see a painting'?

(1) To see a configuration of pigments spread over a piece of canvas, (2) To see a horse in a painting. Actually we do not see

*two* things; we see *one* thing in two different contexts; and *what* we *see* depends on the context. If we turn to Śaṅkuka's theory with the above analysis in mind we arrive at a new interpretation of it, and that might prove to be convincing.

The two notions of imitation (*anukṛti*) and inference (*anumiti*) which Śaṅkuka uses are meant to be taken *together*. In ordinary life we say that we become aware of the mental states of other people by watching their behaviour, expression on their face, what they say, etc. Here we shall not dwell upon the general epistemological question relating to the validity of the knowledge of the mental states of other people based on purely physical, publicly observable evidence; we are more immediately concerned with the problem of seeing a play than with the problem of other minds. However, it is a fact that in ordinary life we do claim to know the mental states and dispositions of people from their publicly observable external behaviour.

A similar process of inference appears to be involved in our seeing a play. But there is a difference. In ordinary life we infer the mental states of a man from his own behaviour. But in the context of seeing a play, we infer mental states of a character 'A' from the external behaviour of an actor 'B'. This seems to be like giving a thermometer to 'X' in order to find out whether 'Y' is running temperature. It is necessary to note here some ontological and epistemological peculiarities of the situation. When we watch a play being performed on the stage, we do not see an actor as a historical person. But if we wish to invite him to tea we cannot avoid considering him as a historical person. The actor in his ordinary life possesses the same ontological status that all of us have. But during the performance of a play this status appears to be temporarily suspended. The character, on the other hand, never had the ontological status the spectators have. During the performance the ontological status of the actor appears to have been temporarily suspended and lent to the character. This process of what we have called 'the temporary lending of the ontological status' by 'A' to 'B' puts certain restrictions on our relations with what we see on the stage; we can see a character on the stage, but we can never invite the character to tea. When we watch a play we are not dreaming; the character cannot therefore be said to

possess *prātibhāsika sattā*. We can coin an expression for what the character seems to possess: *pratibhāsika-sama-sattā*.

We, the spectators, possess *vyāvahārika sattā*; as such we cannot interfere with the life of those who possess *prātibhāsika* or *prātibhāsika-sama-sattā*. For example, we cannot save a dream-person from being murdered, nor can we save Desdemona from being murdered. But on the other hand, the latter two, it seems, can produce *some* effects on us. A dream-serpent cannot bite us, but it can certainly startle us out of sleep. Othello cannot stab us as he can stab Iago, but he can induce in us certain emotional states. One of the important features of the experience of literature lies in just this, although the characters in a play do not possess the same ontological status that we do, they can produce in us effects like emotion-arousal. It should be clear from our discussion that if we follow Śaṅkuka we shall be able to identify some of the important features of the literary experience.

It is usually claimed that Tauta has successfully refuted Śaṅkuka. We need not discuss whether this claim is well-founded or not. The most important question is whether Abhinavagupta found the stand taken by Tauta, his Guru, acceptable. Perhaps he did, as is maintained, with some degree of plausibility, in the *Kalpalatāviveka*. Further, it may be argued that Abhinavagupta had no use for Śaṅkuka's theory.

Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka showed him a new attractive way of tackling the problem of *Rasa*; this consisted in Nāyaka's theory of *sādhāraṇīkarṇa*. When *Vibhāvas*, etc. are universalized and the spectator transcends his particularity, he experiences, not particular-based but universalized emotions; and universalized emotion is *Rasa*. The *Rasa* exparience is universally shareable and shared. To the question: 'where is *Rasa* located?' the answer is : everywhere, in the characters, the actors, the spectators. Aestheticians of the Abhinavagupta school regard *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* as the process of transcending particulars and attaining the universal. It could be regarded as a two-way process involving a movement from one particular to a universal and another movement from the universal to another particular. But it might be objected that *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* in the sense of departicularization should be acceptable to all. This process too is present in our everyday communication. Actually our experience cannot attain the level of verbalization

till it is departicularized upto a certain degree; prior to that we ourselves are not able to understand its character adequately. We are not required to attain a very high degree of departicularization if we are communicating with people with whom we share a common world of experience. But a writer, who does not know all his potential readers, is required to attain a much higher level of departicularization. But, again, even this high degree of departicularization cannot be used as a criterion of literary experience. For even a political leader on an all-India tour has to attain a similar level of departicularization.

There is yet another and a more important sense in which the term *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* may be understood.[9] Some experiences, although sufficiently departicularized to become accessible to others, remain at the level of particulars. Failure in an examination is a case in point. It gives rise to certain practical problems and certain emotional states, which others can understand through their universalizability or communicability; however, neither these problems nor these emotions are called universal. But the problem that Gandhiji was trying to tackle in the riot-torn Noakhali was not primarily individual-related, although his efforts did have a direct bearing on the lives of thousands of individuals. He was primarily tackling the problem of the element of evil in the heart of men; it was directly related to the problem of human essence. It is evident that the problem of human essence and evil possesses universality which the problem of failing in an examination does not have. This has a direct bearing on the problem of greatness in literature. For we all know that universal moral and metaphysical problems give rise to great literature. Unfortunately aestheticians of the Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka-Abhinavagupta school do not appear to have directed their attention to the above interpretation of *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa.*

This leaves only one interpretation in the field: to regard *sādhāraṇīkarṇa* as a one-way process of going from a particular to a universal. To cite an example that is very often cited by the Sanskritists, the fear of the young deer chased by Duṣyanta in the first Act of *Abhijñāna-Śākuntala* in the process of *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*, is transformed into 'fear of the frightened' or 'pure, absolute fear.' We are not told whether and where we are expected

to stop in this process of universalization in the context of literature; we can say that the particulars can be and are meant to be completely transcended and dissolved in the universal. Aristotle, on the other hand, has indicated where to stop in this process. According to him poetry is more philosophical than history, but he does not claim that poetry *is* philosophy. If, as the Sanskritists appear to maintain, poetry transcends and dissolves particulars, the larger the scope of a Universal, the greater should be its value and the more satisfying the *Rasa* experience. In our context the crucial question that arises is: Is there, or can there be, a greater universal than Lord Kṛṣṇa?

Let us now suppose that we are reading, as *rasikas*, the tenth *Skandha* of the *Bhāgavata*, which deals with the life story of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is obviously the *Ālamabana vibhāva*, Gokula and its surroundings, the *Uddīpana vibhāvas*, the responses evoked in the *Gopīs*, the *Anubhāvas*, and the various transient emotional states in their minds, the *Vyabhicārī bhāvas*. The *Uddīpana vibhāvas*, *Anubhāvas*, *Vyabhicārī bhāvas* can all be universalized, but the *Ālambana vibhāva* presents a peculiar problem: how can a universal be universalized? Is the universalization of Kṛṣṇa, the highest universal, conceivable at all? The reader of the *Bhāgavata* becomes at once a *bhakta* and a *rasika*; he becomes the latter by virtue of his being the former. *Bhakti*, by its very nature, *is* a *Rasa*. The identity of *Bhakti* and *Bhakti-Rasa* has been indicated in many places in the *Bhaktirasāyana*. In one place, for example, we are asked to consider the case of a fortunate man who has withdrawn his mind from worldly objects, who looks upon Lord Kṛṣṇa as the sole object of his love, whose heart has attained a liquified state (*drutāvasthā*) because of religious books like the *Bhāgavata*, describing the greatness of God, and whose mind has assumed the form of the Lord. When the mind is in this state, *Rati*, which has assumed the form of the Lord, is transformed into *Rasa*, through the conjunction of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *vyabhicaribhāva*, and flashes upon the mind as the highest joy. This, according to the connoisseurs, is the highest goal of life (*Puruṣārtha*).[10]

It is worth observing that while expounding his own theory, Madhusūdana Sarasvatī does not mention either *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* or *citraturagapratīti*. The first he must have taken for granted as

a fact well established in the tradition; and he appears to have no need for anything from Śaṅkukas's theory. Janārdanaśāstrī Pāṇḍeya, his editor, also does not make the ontological distinctions implied in terms like *vibhāva*. For example, he says, *anubhāva* means the responses which follow. The responses like movements of the eyes in the *bhakta* are the *anubhāva* of *Bhakti* (p. 10). Actually, words '*vibhāvas*' and '*anubhāvas*' are used in the place of 'cause' and 'effect' with a view to indicating the distinction between dramatic experience and other varieties of experience. In the Sanskritist tradition, Duṣyanta is called *vibhāva*; if Śakuntalā blushes in response to his advances, that is called *Anubhāva* and not 'effect'. Janārdanaśāstrī has departed from this tradition. But if *Bhakti* is identified with *Bhakti-rasa* there is no reason left for making any distinction between the characters and the spectators.

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī regards pleasure as the highest goal of life (*Puruṣārtha*). It is true that in the Sanskritist tradition *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Mokṣa* are called the four *Puruṣārthas*; but, according to Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, this is to be taken only in a metaphorical and not literal sense.[11] Madhusūdana Sarasvatī has on the one hand placed pleasure at the centre of *Rasa*; and, on the other, affirmed that pleasure is the ultimate essence of the universe. In his opinion, although all *Rasas* are pleasurable, only *Bhakti-rasa* can attain the highest degree of pleasure.[12] Other *rasas* fall short of this because they contain, in varying degrees, the element of *Māyā* or *Jaḍatā*. These arguments lead to the conclusion that *Bhakti* is not only a *Rasa*, but that it is the highest amongst all the *Rasas*. The suggestion is very clear: *Bhaktas* as well as *Rasikas* should turn away from other *rasas* and concentrate on *Bhakti-Rasa*, which is the same as *Bhakti*.

*Rati* is the source of both *Bhakti-Rasa* as well as *Bhakti*, which is the foundation of *Bhāgavata Dharma*.[13] *Bhakti* as well as *Bhakti-rasa* emanate from the same *sthāyi bhāva* (viz., *Rati*) and have the same expression, (viz., pleasure). The only difference is that in *Bhakti* one gets the most powerful expression of *rasa* and pleasure, and that raises *Bhakti* to the supreme position. It should be clear from the above that (a) Madhusūdana Sarasvatī does not place the *rasa* experience in a class

by itself, severing all its connections with other varieties of experience; (b) he assumes that therc is a continuity between the above experiences; (c) he does not give the *rasa* experience the highest place among human experiences. Other evidence in the text points in the same direction. For example, the author does not talk at all about the difference between *loka-dharmin* and *nāṭya-dharmin*. Again, he does not mention an important point which has been emphasized by Abhinavagupta, viz. that the *rasa experience* is coterminus with the performance of the play which induces it. These points have no significance in Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's general framework. It is clear that he does not want to claim for the *rasa-experience* the type of autonomy that Kant claims for the experience of Free Beauty.

Two points may be mentioned here in passing: (1) Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka, Abhinavagupta and many others of the same school, try to establish a connection between the *rasa-experience* and the *Brahma-experience*, with the help of the concept of *sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*. Madhusūdana Sarasvatī has tried to establish a connection between *rasa* and the ultimate Realty through the notion of pleasure (*Ānanda*). A doubt that constantly gnaws at the mind is whether it is right to assume that the *Ānanda* in the trilogy of *Sat*, *Cit*, *Āṇanda* is the same as the *Ānanda* that the Sanskrit writers on *rasa* have in mind. What valid ground is there for assuming that the word '*Ānanda*' is used in an indentical sense in the two contexts? If the two are identical, why can we not stretch the term '*Ānanda*' to other varieties of pleasure, like the pleasure that a favourite dish gives? Can we then say that we are close to the ultimate reality when we are relishing with pleasure a tasty dish, and away from it when we are taking, much against our wish, an unpalatable medicine? This should serve as a warning that the notion of '*Ānanda*' needs to be scrutinised carefully before we use it in different contexts. *Ānanda* still awaits a Ryle or a Wittgenstein. A close scrutiny of the notion will be of great help in the field of Poetics and also in that of Philosophy.

The second point is related to the curious fact that after the 13th century books on Poetics stopped being written—this is specially true of Marathi and also probably of other modern Indian languages. It is ture that Jagannātha's treatise belongs to this period. But that cannot be regarded as relevant evidence in

our context; firstly, because it is written in Sanskrit, and secondly because Jagannātha does not appear to have made use of poetry that was being written by his contemporaries. The book can be described most aptly as a late fruit that the old tree of Sanskrit poetics bore; it has a fresh look only because *Navya-Nyāya* has contributed a fresh logical rigour to the theorizing it contains. It cannot, therefore, be regarded as a representative theoretical articulation of the poetic sensibility of the age. This absence of books on Poetics in Marathi, first noticed by Dr. S. V. Ketkar in his *Māhārāṣṭrīyāṁce Kāvyaparīkṣaṇa*, can be traced to the identification of *Bhakti-rasa* with *Bhakti*. If the two are identical, and if much has been and is being written on *Bhakti*, where is the need to write separately on *Bhakti-rasa*? And further if *Bhakti-rasa* is the highest among *Rasas*, and if the former has been taken care of, why write on any *Rasa* for that matter ? The above identity provides a satisfactory explanation of the curious fact that the saint-poets of Maharashtra were more proud of being *Bhaktas* than of being poets. It is true that Rāmadās has written on poetry; but, as Professor M.V. Dhond has suggested, his aim was not to discuss the nature of poetry as such, but to place effective poetic tools in the hands of his missionary disciples.

That Madhusūdana Sarasvatī should have given so much importance to *Bhakti-Rasa* can be best explained by the fact that the Bhakti movement which started in the 7th and 8th centuries had swept over the whole of India by the 16th century, and had permeated the life style of a very large section of the people. People of all philosophical persuasions had to come to terms with it in some way or other. There is also another and more general explanation of the importance of *Bhakti* in medieval India. Man has emotional as well as intellectual needs. *Bhakti* probably satisfies the emotional needs of man. This explains why many who accept *Advaita* on the intellectual plane, also accept *Bhakti*. Some philosophers regard *Bhakti* as the easiest way to spiritual liberation which is accessible to all; others have looked upon *Bhakti* as a means to reach the threshold of knowledge, which alone can assure liberation. But there are some who regard *Bhakti* and *Knowledge* as coterminus.

Plurality is implied in the concept of *Bhakti*; in the absence of

the former, *upāsanā* is logically impossible. On the other hand, plurality is logically incompatible with *Kevalādvaita* and Madhusūdana Sarasvatī is a well known exponent of *Kevalādvaita*; he is the author of the famous refutation of the Mādhva school, the *Advaitasiddhi*. *Brahman* as conceived by *Kevalādvaitins* is radically different from the Hegelian Absolute. The latter needs the other for its own self-realization. It attains its realization through expressing, externalizing itself. Its nature is 'unity in diversity.' But the *Brahman* of the *Kevalādvaitins* does not depend for its self-realization on any thing beyond itself. To use the familiar analogy, earth out of which different things like pots, pitchers, etc. are made, is alone real; the difference among the earthen things is unreal, for they are, in the ultimate analysis, earth.

If plurality is unreal and unity alone is real, what account can be given of *Karma* and *Bhakti*, both of which imply plurality? Vidyāraṇya is reported to have helped Harihara and Bukka in founding the Vijayanagar Empire; but it is said that he did all this before he had attained the ultimate realization. Attaining it is different from being intellectually convinced that the ultimate reality is an undifferentiated unity. One who is intellectually convinced about the ultimate unity of the universe but who has not attained the ultimate, lives, like the rest of us, in the phenomenal world which possesses *vyāvahārika sattā*. It is but natural that he would perform the prescribed *karmas* for the purification of his mind, and also that he would perform *upāsāna*. But what will be the form of life of one who has attained the ultimate and has not relinquished his bodily existence, a *Jīvanmukta*? In the *Vedāntasāra*, we are told that the evil impulses in his mind will have been destroyed by his good deeds; only good impulses will remain, and consequently his actions also will be good. But the same book mentions also another alternative: a *Jīvanmukta* will be completely indifferent to ethical distinctions. Some other books use the analogy of the Potter's wheel, which, once set in motion will continue to move in the same direction even after the pot is removed from it; in the same manner, the *Jīvanmukta* having got used to doing only good actions will automatically continue to do good deeds during the rest of his life. However, it is not obligatory for him to do any good deeds. In this context Vishnushastri Bapat's edition of *Śaṅkarabhāṣya* on the *Gītā*

will prove to be very illuminating; for he has undertaken there a detailed refutation of B.G. Tilak's attempt at reconciling *Kevalādvaita* and *Karma*.

The *Kevalādvaitins* do not appear to find *Kevalādvaita* incompatible with *Bhakti* as they find it incompatible with *Karma*. This can be gathered from the general drift of Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's argument. It is true that in the first *Ullāsa* he rejects the suggestion that *Bhakti* and *Brahma-vidyā* be regarded as identical on the ground that the two differ in their nature (*svabhāva*), means (*sādhanā*), the fruit (*phala*), and necessary qualification (*adhikāra*).[14] But later in the book he appears to have modified his position. If there is a difference between *Bhakti* and *Brahma-vidyā*, how can it be regarded as the highest *Puruṣārtha*? *Bhakti* can be given this place on the ground that it gives the highest and eternal pleasure.[15] It is because of this that *Jīvanamuktas* are attracted towards *Bhakti*. The author recommends that even those who have attained the final emancipation should turn to *Bhakti*.[16] The verses from the *Bhāgavata* that he has quoted towards the close of the first *Ullāsa* indicate that the author has brought the pleasure of *Bhakti* very close to that of *Brahman*.[17] Janārdanaśāstrī Pāṇḍeya has given some verses from the Purāṇas in his commentary. These show the general tendency among people to identify Lord Kṛṣṇa with *Brahman*.[18] In the third *Ullāsa* Madhusūdana Sarasvatī tells us that poetry (obviously *Bhakti*-poetry) gives the reader unqualified (*nirvikalpa*) pure pleasure.[19] However, he has not explained the process of arriving at the unqualified pleasure from the qualified (*savikalpa*) pleasure.

It should be evident from the above discussion that efforts were being made by many to bring the experiences of *Bhakti* and *Brahman* close to each other. It should be further noted that Madhusūdana Sarasvatī was not the first philosopher to do this. Śaṅkara himself appears to have come very close to this position in some places. For example, this becomes quite evident in his discussion of the 54th and 55th *ślokas* of the 18th *Adhyāya* of the *Gītā* which deal with *Bhakti* which is based on, and which follows, the final realization (*Jñāna*). Śaṅkara says that the equanimous soul which has attained *Brahman* never experiences sorrow, never craves for anything, is never disturbed by pleasure; what-

ever be the object of his experience, his equanimity is never disturbed. Such a *Jñānī Jīvanmukta* achieves my fourth *Bhakti*,[20] '...The adherence to the knowledge of the identity between the Soul and the Ultimate is the fourth *Bhakti*. He knows me through *Bhakti* grounded in knowledge.'[21] The problems arising out of the claim regarding the identity between adherence to knowledge and *Bhakti*, between plurality (implied in *Bhakti*) and *Advaita* have not been discussed or solved here. In other places in the same *Bhāṣya*, Śaṅkara has given the highest honour to knowledge alone. For example, in his commentary on the 10th and 11th *ślokas* of the 10th *Adhyāya*, he says that the *Bhakta* receives *Buddhi-yoga* (*Jñāna-yoga*) from God; and with the lamp of knowledge, the darkness of ignorance in him is dispelled.[22] From this it should be evident that, according to Śaṅkara, the final liberation (*Mokṣa*) can be attained directly through knowledge alone; even a *Bhakta* has to pursue the path of knowledge. The two positions are obviously irreconcilable. Śaṅkara, and later, Madhusūdana Sarasvatī, do not offer any satisfactory solution of the problem. The Maharashtrian saint poets appear to have taken the mutual compatibility of *Bhakti* and *Kevalādvaita* for granted; but they have not addressed themselves to the problem on a theoretical plane. These philosophers and poets have moulded our form of life in various ways. We are what we are, at least in some measure, because of the above mentioned combination; and this inspite of the theoretical difficulty noted above. Hence the urgency to find a solution to the problem.

NOTES

1. Navarasamilitaṁ vā kevalaṁ vā pumartham
   Paramamiha Mukunde bhakti-yogaṁ vadanti /
   Nirupamasukhasaṁvidrūpamaspṛṣṭaduḥkham
   Tamahamakhilatuṣṭyai śāstradṛṣṭyā vyanajmi //
   —Śrībhagavadbhaktirasāyana, p. 1.
2. Drutasya bhagavaddharmāddhārāvāhikatāṁ gatā /
   sarveṣe manaso vṛttirbhaktirityabhidhīyate // (p. 30)
3. Tasmāt kenāpyupāyena manaḥ Kṛṣṇe niveśayet // (p. 31)
4. Ratirdevādiviṣayā vyabhicārī tathorjitaḥ /
   Bhāvaḥ prokto raso neti yaduktaṁ rasakovidaiḥ //

Devāntareṣu jīvatvāt parānandaprakāśanāt /
Tadyojyaṁ paramānandarūpe na paramātmani / (pp. 168-69)

5. Vibhāvairanubhāvaiśca vyabhicāribhirapyuta /
sthāyī bhāvaḥ sukhatvena vyajyamāno rasaḥ smṛtaḥ // (p. 171)
6. Nanu ko'yaṁ raso nāma kinniṣṭho vā bhavedasau /
Asya pratyāyakaḥ ko vā pratītirapi kīdṛśī // (p. 171)
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 172-173.
8. See my paper 'Śaṅkuka—A Defence' presented in 1983 at a seminar organized by B. J. Institute of Indology, Patan, North Gujarat. Proceedings of the Seminar (entitled *Some Aspects of the Rasa Theory*) are in Press.
9. See my paper 'Is the Rasa Theory Relevant Today?' *Philosophy East and West*, June 1980.
10. Nikhilampi viṣayaniṣṭhaṁ premāṇaṁ bhagavatyeva pratiṣṭhāpayatassakalaviṣayavimukhamanaso mahābhāgasya kasyacidbhagavadguṇagarimagranthanarūpagranthaśravaṇajanitadrutirūpāyāṁ manovṛttau sarvasādhanaphalabhūtāyāṁ gṛhītabhagavadākārāyāṁ vibhāvānuphāvavyabhicārisaṁyogena rasarūpatayābhivyakto bhagavadākāratārūpo ratyākhyassthāyibhāvaḥ paramānandasākṣātkārātmakaḥ prādurbhavati / sa eva bhaktiyoga iti taṁ paramaṁ niratiśayaṁ puruṣārthaṁ vadanti rasajñāḥ // (pp. 9-10)
11. Duḥkhāsaṁbhinnasukhaṁ hi paramaḥ puruṣārtha iti sarvatantrasiddhāntaḥ / Dharmārthakāmamokṣāścatvāraḥ puruṣārthā iti prasiddhistu 'Lāṅgalaṁ mama Jīvanam' itivat sādhane phalatvavacanādaupacārikī / Ato na sukhameva puruṣārtha iti pakṣahāniḥ / (p. 12)
12. Bhagavān paramānandasvarūpaḥ svayameva hi /
Manogatastadākāro rasatāmeti puṣkalam //
Sthāyibhāvasya rasatvopapattaye paramānandarūpatāmupapādayati bhagavāniti / Bimbameva hyupādhiniṣṭhatvena pratīyamānaṁ pratibimbamityucyate / Paramānandaśca bhagvān manasi pratibimbitasthāyibhāvatāmāsādya rasatāmāsādayati bhaktirasasya paramānandarūpatvaṁ nirvivādam / nāpyālambanavibhāvasthāyibhāvayoraikyaṁ, bimbapratibimbabhāvena bhedasya vyavahārasiddhatvādīśajīvayoriva/ (pp. 41-42)
13. Tato ratyaṅkurotpattiḥ / Ratirnāma bhaktirasasthāyibhāvo drutacittapraviṣṭabhagavadākāratārūpassaṁskāraviśeṣa iti vakṣyate / sa evāṅkuro bhāgavatadharmānuṣṭhānātmaka bījasya / (p. 116)

Also see :

Sadājñātañca tadbrahma meyaṅkāntādimānataḥ /
Māyāvṛttitirobhāve vṛttyā sattvasthayā kṣaṇam //
Atastadeva bhāvatvaṁ manasi pratipadyate /
Kiñca nyūnāñca rasatāṁ yāti jāḍyavimiśraṇāt //

Madhusūdana Sarasvatī writes on the second kārikā :

Viṣayāvacchinnacaitanyameva dravāvasthamanovṛttyārūḍhatayā bhāvatvaṁ prāpya rasatāṁ prāpnotīti na laukika-rasasyāpi paramānandarūpatvānupapattiḥ / Ata evānavacchinnacidānanda-

ghanasya bhagavataḥ sphuraṇādbhaktirase' tyantādhikyamānandasya/ Laukikarase tu viṣayāvacchinnasyaiva cidānandāṁśasya sphuraṇāttatrānandasya nyūnataiva / Tasmādbhaktirasa eva laukikarasānupekṣya sevya itvarthaḥ / (pp. 44-46)

14. Na, svarūpasādhanaphalādhikārivailakṣaṇyādbhaktibrahmavidyayoḥ / Dravībhāvapūrvikā hi manaso bhagavadākāratā savikalpakavṛttirūpā bhaktiḥ, dravībhāvānupetā dvitīyātmamātragocarā nirvikalpakamanovṛttirbrahmavidyā / Bhagavadguṇagarimagranthanarūpagranthaśravaṇaṁ bhaktisādhanam / Tattvamasyādivedāntamahāvākyaṁ brahmavidyāsādhanam / Bhagavadviṣayakapremaprakāśo bhaktiphalaṁ, sarvānarthamūlājñānanivṛttirbrahmavidyāphalam / Prāṇimātrasya bhaktāvadhikāraḥ, brahmavidyāyāntu sādhanacatuṣṭayasampannasya paramahaṁsaparivrājakasya / (p. 24-25)

15. Nanu brahmavidyātiriktatve bhakteḥ svargādivanniratiśayapuruṣārthatvaṁ na syāditi cenna, svargāderniyatadeśakālaśarīrendriyādibhogyatvena ..... niratiśayatvābhāve' pi bhaktisukhadhārāyāssarvadeśakālaśarīrendriyādisādhāraṇyena brahmavidyāphalavadupabhoktuṁ śakyatvāt kṣayitvapāratantryalakṣaṇaduḥkhadvayānuvedhābhāvena niratiśayatvopapatteḥ / (p. 27)

16. Bhaktisukhādvairāgyaṁ na syāditi tviṣṭameva nāpāditam /
Ātmārāmāśca munayo nirgranthā apyurukrame /
Kurvantyahaitukīṁ bhaktimitthambhūtaguṇo Hariḥ //
Ityādinā jīvanmuktānāmapi bhagavadbhaktipratipādanāt //
Saṁsārarogeṇa balīyasā ciraṁ nipīḍitaistatpraśame' tiśikṣitam /
Idaṁ bhavadbhirbahudhā vyayātigaṁ nipīyatāṁ bhaktirasāyanaṁ budhāḥ / (pp. 29-30)

17. Adhokṣajālambhamihāśubhātmanassarīriṇaḥ saṁsṛticakraśātanam / Tadbrahmanirvāṇasukhaṁ vidurbudhāstato bhajadhvaṁ hṛdaye hṛdīśvaram // (p. 122)

18. Śṛuṇu sakhi kautukamekaṁ Nandaniketāṅgaṇe mayā dṛṣṭaḥ/
Dhūlidhūsarāṅgo nṛtyati vedāntasiddhāntaḥ //
Śyāmaṁ śāntaṁ tribhaṅgaṁ ravikaravasanaṁ bhūṣitaṁ vaijayantyā /
Vande vṛndāvanasthaṁ yuvatiśatavṛtaṁ brahma gopāleveṣam //
Komalaṁ kūjayan veṇum śyāmalo'yaṁ kumārakaḥ /
Vedavedyaṁ paraṁ brahma bhāsatāṁ purato mama // (p. 163).

19. Nityaṁ sukhamabhivyaktaṁ raso vai sa iti śruteḥ /
Pratītiḥ svaprakāśasya nirvikalpasukhātmikā // (p. 179)

20. Brahmabhūto brahmaprāptaḥ prasannātmā labdhādhyātmaprasādo na śocati kiṁcidarthavaikalyamātmano vaiguṇyaṁ coddiśya na śocati na saṁtapyate na kāṅkṣati /...samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣvātmaupamyena sarveṣu bhūteṣu sukhaṁ duḥkhaṁ vā samameva paśyatītyartho..... tasya vakṣyamāṇatvādbhaktyā māmabhijānātīti / Evaṁbhūto jñānaniṣṭho madbhaktiṁ mayi parameśvare bhaktiṁ bhajanaṃ paramuttamāṃ jñānalakṣṇāṃ caturthīṁ labhate caturvidhā bhajante māmityuktam / (*Srīmad Bhagvadgītābhāṣyārtha*, Ed. and Tr. Viṣṇuśāstrī Bāpata, Poona, 1921, pp. 1226-27).

21. Tato jñānalakṣaṇayā bhaktyā māmabhijānāti yāvānahamupādhikṛta-vistarabhedo yaścāhaṁ vidhvastasarvopādhibheda...taṁ māmadvaitaṁ...tattvataḥ abhijānāti/ Tato māmevaṃ tattvato jñātvā viśate tadanantaraṁ māmeva...seyaṁ jñānaniṣṭhā'rtādibhaktitrayāpekṣayā parā caturthī bhaktirityuktā / Tayā parayā bhaktyā bhagavantaṁ tattvato'bhijānāti / yadanantarameveśvarakṣetrajñabhedabuddhi-raśeṣato nivartate / Ato jñānaniṣṭhalakṣaṇayā bhaktyā māmabhijānātīti vacanaṁ na virudhyate / (*Ibid*, pp. 1228-29)

22. Te yathoktaprakārairbhajante māṁ bhaktāḥ santaḥ—teṣāṃ satata-yuktānāṃ nityābhiyuktānāṃ nivṛttasarvabāhyaiṣaṇānāṃ bhajatāṁ sevamānānāṁ, kimarthitvādinā kāraṇena netyāha prītipūrvakaṁ prītiḥ snehastatpūrvakaṁ māṁ bhajatāmityarthaḥ / Dadāmi prayacchāmi buddhiyogaṁ buddhiḥ samyagdarśanaṁ mattattvaviṣayaṁ, tena yogo buddhiyogastaṁ buddhiyogam / Tena buddhiyogena samyagdarśanalakṣaṇena māṁ parameśvaramātmatvenopayānti pratipadyante / Ke te ye maccittatvādiprakārairmāṁ bhajante / (*Ibid.*, p. 739).

See also:

Kimarthaṁ kasya vā tvatprāptipratibandhahetornāśakaṁ buddhiyogaṁ teṣāṁ tvadbhaktānāṁ dadāsītyākāṅkṣāyāmāha — teṣāmeva kathaṁ nāma śreyaḥ syādityanukampārthaṁ dayāhetorahamajñānajamavivekato jātaṁ mithyāpratyayalakṣaṇaṁ mohāndhakāraṁ tamo nāśayāmyātmabhāvastha ātmano bhāvo'ntaḥkaraṇāśayastasminneva sthitaḥ san / Jñānadīpena vivekapratyayarūpeṇa bhaktiprasādasnehābhiṣiktena madbhāvanābhiniveśavāteritena brahmacaryādisādhanasaṁskāratvaprajñāvartinā viraktāntaḥkaraṇādhāreṇa viṣayāvyāvṛttarāgadveṣākaluṣitanivātāpavārakasthena nityapravṛttaikāgryadhyānajanitasamyagdarśanabhāsvatā jñānadīpenetyarthaḥ (*Ibid.*, p. 741)

# PART IV

R. S. BHATNAGAR

# *NĀṬYA* AGAIN

As would be evident from the editorial remarks a seminar was held on the general theme of the nature of the cognitive tradition in India in the Philosophy Department of the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. The *Nāṭyaśāstra* (*NS*) of Bharata was included as one of the texts to work with. Some papers were presented on the conceptual structure underlying the text while some others that were presented were concerned with *Rasa* or *Dhvani* having similar motivation. The need for the seminar arose out of the discussions and deliberations of an interdisciplinary group devoted to the articulation of the conceptual leanings and orientation of the Indian tradition of cognitive enterprise.

After the seminar at a later sitting of the group it was decided to have a second look on the papers connected with the *Nāṭya-śāstra* and related aesthetic issues. The first round was to be undertaken by the present writer. However, at that time, I had no idea that the disjointed ruminations presented in the group would be required at a later stage to be appended to the collection of the papers presented on the subject. Commenting on that third level presentation, Dr. Daya Krishna had expressed some dissatisfaction and promised to present his own views in this connection in order to show what was wanted. He later on came out with a very elaborate but highly generalized sort of scheme involving the key terms used by the authors of the various papers. When I was asked to render into writing what was presented in one of the sittings of the group, I was in a fix for I had misplaced the notes I had used then. Eventually the notes were found but I had a feeling of inadequacy and dissatisfaction after looking into them. Hence I decided to read the papers once again. That proved that there was some ground

for the dissatisfaction of some members of the group with my earlier presentation.

This brief preamble was necessary to point out the platitude that an interpretation at a certain point of time need not be a finished and final statement. The attempt of understanding the other may reveal any number of possibilities each time getting less obscure and nearer the meaning of the writer or the speaker. It also explains the occasion in which this additional exercise was undertaken.

To begin with, I place two restrictions on myself. First, I will not discuss my paper on the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Secondly, the presentation will not be concerned with the question of the validity of the scheme articulated by any writer. I would rather look for the central concept that is chosen in the presentation concerned and try to see how the rest are shown to rally around it. In other words, how the variety of concepts embedded in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* or implicit in the notion of *Dhvani* are preceived as related with each other in a possible framework by the author concerned. Since fortunately, more than one deal with the same theme, it would be interesting to see whether an overall profile emerges. May be, that comes a little nearer to what was stipulated in the beginning. The following comments are divided into two sections: the first is concerned with the two papers on the *Nāṭyaśāstra* while the second relates to the two papers on *Rasa/Dhvani.*

I. It is interesting to note that both Prof. Kantak and Dr Mukund Lath consider a certain framework or background to be necessary against which the main concepts of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* are to be viewed. While Dr Lath prefers a more endemic perspective defined by the 'why' and 'wherefore' of the *Nāṭyaśāstra,* Prof. Kantak assumes an exogenous vantage point and attempts to delineate the conceptual structure of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* in contrast to that of the Aristotelian poetics. Could one hazard an occupational bias for the choice? (As readers know Prof. Kantak teaches English Literature and Prof. Lath teaches History) Let that be an open question.

Prof. Kantak reflects on *Nāṭya* being the central theme of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* in a more restricted fashion, i.e. *Nāṭya* as an art object, while Dr Lath looks at it from a multi-dimensional approach. For him, though it is an art object, it has to be

analysed as a performance and therefore as falling within the category of action. It is, on the one hand, a concern of aesthetics while on the other a subject of entertainment. Not only that, it is also seen as having educative value and also considered as an art supportive of several others. Both Kantak and Lath believe that as an art category *Nāṭya* involves some kind of transformation of the natural, folk and ordinary into something non-natural, sophisticated and extra-ordinary. The concept of imitation and its use in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* has been instrumental for both of them in unfolding the transformation involved. However, both differ in their vision of the net result in the sense that they seem to perceive different ingredients as occupying the central or more important position in the aesthetic object. Kantak emphasizes the etherealized, but essential, moment characterizing the being. He prefers to call it quintessential action rather than action in the crude sense, a point used to accentuate the contrast between Bharata and Greek tragedy. *Nāṭya* is to generate a total apprehension of this essence by an integral dynamism of dance, music and poetry. For Lath on the other hand, the integral constituents of *Nāṭya* are *Rasa* — the soul, and *itivṛtta* (plot) — the body—a little more tangible picture compared to that of Kantak. Of course, *Rasa* has its own determinants and characterizations and similarly *itivṛtta* which lends a distinctive character to *Nāṭya* as *Rūpaka*. While Kantak brings into relief the aesthetic uniqueness of *Nāṭya* by putting it somewhere between the Greek tragedy and *Noh* of Japan, Lath points to the embodiment of the causal principle linking *karma* and *phala* in terms of the *itivṛtta* and the doctrine of five *sandhis*. Kantak interprets the *sandhis* as exhibiting the growth of something predetermined and thus showing the dynamics of *Nāṭya* as encompassed in cyclic time. Lath does not give such an impression and appears to capture the action aspect of *Nāṭya* in a more straightforward fashion.

II. Let us consider the other two papers on *Rasa*. Prof. Krishnamoorthy moves with his solid presentation in the manner of an ideal teacher in the classroom while Prof. K.J. Shah (KJ) feels like moving a little more freely with a penchant for conjectures, disappointingly not very wild! Krishnamoorthy's paper brings out the theoretical demands involved in aesthetic experience and appreciation and shows how the doctrine of *alaṅkāra* fails to

meet these demads. For Krishnamoorthy, to unfold the conceptual structure underlying the notions of *Rasa* and *Dhvani* is not only to elaborate the theoretical structure, but also to test the power of the theory proposed. Now, according to him, the doctrine of suggestiveness explains on the one hand how a linguistic artefact without direct expression of the mood succeeds in evoking the aesthetic response and how, on the other hand, the trained sensibility is enabled to have an access into the suggested aesthetic meaning. But though the poetic devices and the critic's or *sahṛdaya's* sensibility are complementary to each other, yet Krishnamoorthy seems to attach greater significance to the latter. Still another concept is brought by him to make the picture complete and this points to moral, or perhaps the elevating or edifying aspect, of aesthetic experience.

Shah allocates this moral concept a pretty elevated place in the framework of concepts which need application to make the notion of *Rasa* intelligible. There is, of course, a standard repertoire of emotive shades which gives us the standard specific *sthāyī bhāvas*. There are related conditions—*anubhāvas, vyabhicārī bhāvas*—which can as well be understood in terms of stimuli which have causal relationship with the *sthāyī bhāvas*. Now here Shah brings his own conjecture into the open, that is, the relationship between these *bhāvas* and various multifarious situations in which human beings find themselves in their goal-seeking behaviour which is technically comprehended in the concept of *puruṣārtha*. It appears that he brings affective tonality, i.e., *rasa* into the open and allows it a greater scope. One might suspect that this move may rob it of its specific poetic or aesthetic core, for once it is seen as a necessary concomitant of any goal-seeking activity it remains no more the exclusive possession of aesthetics. To round up the picture, Shah seems to highlight the background against which the notion of *rasa* could be viewed—the background which is spelled out in terms of the moral and the spiritual outlook prevalent in the Indian context.

### *An Overview*

One thing appears to be quite clear whether we look upon the life-size span of *Nāṭya* or, more specifically, the specialized realm of aesthetic experience, and this is that there exists a rigorous

Indian tradition of intellectual venture, having a full awareness of what a theory consists in and what demands are to be met if it has to be viable and powerful. Lath and the writer's own attempt bring this out to some extent.

The perusal of the four papers reveals two important things: (1) there are various constellations of concepts, each having a central concept around which the others cluster, viz. action, game or play, architecture, music, dance, language, behaviour patterns, narration, and values which in turn could form independent constellations. The concept of *Nāṭya* reveals a pattern which seems to partake from each of these other constellations and yet maintains its own distinctive identity. And (2) Kantak's reference to *Śilpaśāstra* comes to mind where the analogical element as well as the ideal element both have to satisfied in order to generate an aesthetic artefact—maybe, it is *Nāṭya* itself.

DAYA KRISHNA

# THE SEARCH FOR A CONCEPTUAL STRUCTURE OF THE *NĀṬYAŚĀSTRA*

## Six wise men in search of truth: A reflection upon reflection

Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* is the foundational text not only for understanding Indian thinking about Drama but almost for all the other arts as well. It has played the same role in the Indian intellectual thinking about the arts and matters which are today called 'aesthetic', which Aristotle's *Poetics* has played in the West. The search for the conceptual structure of such a foundational text by the six scholars, at least four of whom have devoted a large part of their life to studies which have been predominantly concerned with issues relating to arts, deserves a serious scrutiny. True, only four of the articles may be said to deal directly with the *Nāṭyaśāstra*; the other two deal with Ānandavardhana and Madhusūdana Sarasvatī. But even these two should throw light on the continuity and discontinuities in the conceptual mapping of the terrain opened in such a pioneering manner by the author of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*.

The concepts that are specific to a realm may be said to define and demarcate it from others, and the diverse ways in which the interrelationships between the concepts can be conceived may be treated as the possible ways in which the realm can be articulated or the terrain pictured. The terminology of 'articulation' or 'picturing' is, of course, misleading as it suggests too static and passive a view of the situation, while the fact is that the diverse 'articulations' and 'pictures' are not merely telling us 'how to look' and 'what to look for' but also 'what to do' and 'how to do' if the realm is such that it has to be sustained by human action and its values realised by human endeavour. The six authors, therefore, are not merely telling us that this is what *Nāṭyaśāstra* is, but that this is the way it *ought* to be seen. As presumably they are all looking at a common object, there are bound to be overlap-

ping points in what the different viewers report, and this may be treated with some justification as the core character of the text which is sought to be articulated and understood in its conceptual structure. But the concepts, which one viewer picks and the others do not, may be as important as those which everyone does. And this, not only because they tell us something significant about the viewer, but also because they reveal a possible way of viewing the text which is inherent in the text itself. Beyond this, there is the problem of the interrelationship between concepts and the diverse ways in which these interrelationships can be conceived. These would provide the different conceptual structures which may be said to conceptually articulate the realm in diverse ways.

The six studies which are the subject of this second order reflection on the *Nāṭyaśāstra* relate to it in diverse ways. The papers of Dr R.S. Bhatnagar and Dr Mukund Lath directly deal with the conceptual structure of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Prof. K.J. Shah's paper concentrates mainly on one concept that is perhaps most central to the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, that is, *Rasa*, and others that are ancillary to it. Prof. Kantak's focus of interest is to find the distinctive difference between the Indian and the Western approach to drama both at the theoretical and the practical level. Prof. Krishnamoorthy and Prof. Patankar deal with later developments of certain concepts by Ānandavardhana and Madhusūdana Sarasvatī—concepts which derive from and are rooted in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*. But all the six authors, whether they are concerned with the *Nāṭyaśāstra* directly or indirectly, use a number of concepts defining or demarcating the field generally designated by the term 'aesthetics' and we will be concerned only with them in this second order reflection on what they have written.

To pick up the concepts used or mentioned by each of these writers in their paper requires, perhaps, first a decision regarding what is to count as a concept and why. This, however, raises the still more puzzling question whether there can, in principle, be anything which may not be regarded as a concept in language. There may be some doubt regarding this in non-verbal languages, but it is difficult to conceive how there can be anything non-conceptual in a verbal language. However it may be, it is obvious that we are not concerned with each and every concept that may occur

in the papers, but only with those that presumably have something to do with the distinctive theme of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*.

The concepts that I have picked up from each of the papers need not be regarded as the only concepts that could have been picked for the purpose we have in hand. One might easily have included others or ignored those that have been included here. However, as the purpose is to illustrate a method which may be used for articulating the conceptual structure or structures underlying a text, no great harm need be feared by some concepts having been included or excluded in our selection. In fact, the more such attempts are made by diverse persons, the greater the chance of capturing the conceptual structures embedded in our texts.

We shall start with the two papers that address themselves directly to the task of articulating the conceptual structure of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*.

The following concepts seem common to the two papers:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Nāṭya | 11. Itivṛtta | 21. Sandhi |
| 2. Śāstra | 12. Vṛtti | 22. Prakaraṇa |
| 3. Krīḍanīyaka | 13. Avasthā | 23. Pravṛtti |
| 4. Prayoga | 14. Śilpa | 24. Sārvavarṇika |
| 5. Lokadharmin | 15. Yoga | 25. Dharma |
| 6. Nāṭyadharmin | 16. Prakṛti | 26. Artha |
| 7. Pāṭhya | 17. Bīja | 27. Yaśas |
| 8. Gīta | 18. Bindu | 28. Alaṁkāra |
| 9. Abhinaya | 19. Patākā | |
| 10. Rasa | 20. Prakarī | |

Practically all the concepts used by Dr R.S. Bhatnagar are also found in the paper of Dr Lath except the concepts of 1. Nāṭyotpatti, 2. Nāṭyasiddhi, 3. Nāṭyaghāta, 4. Nāṭyatattva, 5. Nāṭakakāra, 6. Prayoktṛ, 7. Ādhyātmika, 8. Alaukika, 9. Itihāsa and 10. Daivikī. The concepts that Dr Lath has used and which are not found in Dr Bhatnagar's paper are the following: 1. Lakṣaṇa 2. Anukṛti, 3. Triloka, 4. Saṃsthā, 5. Sarvakarmānudarśaka, 6. Sarvaśilpapravartaka, 7. Dharmakarmānudarśana, 8. Śravya, 9. Dṛśya, 10. Rūpaka, 11. Uparūpaka, 12. Bhāva, 13. Vibhāva, 14. Saṅgraha, 15. Pūrṇāṅga, 16, Hīnāṅga, 17. Dharma, 18. Karma 19. Phala, etc. I have chosen the interesting omissions, though there are others as well.

It is obvious that one of the basic distinctions that is being pointed out is between *Śāstras* that are primarily concerned with *prayoga*, and those for whom *prayoga* is only secondarily relevant. Amongst the so-called *Prayoga-śāstras, Nāṭyaśāstra* is concerned with something that is essentially *Krīḍanīyaka*, and this consists in its being an *anukṛti* which is *sarvakarmānudarśaka* through means that are both *dṛśya* and *śravya* and which uses *pāṭhya, gīta* and *abhinaya* for the purpose. The *anukṛti*, as it is of human action, has inevitably to deal with *Dharma* on the one hand and *Bhāva*, on the other. Thus it has to be *dharmakarmānudarśana* which cannot be done without bringing the conflict of *dharma* with *adharma* into the picture. On the other hand, *Bhāva* as a dimension of human action takes us into a different direction, for then *Karma* is seen as arising not from a sense of *Dharma* but from feelings resulting in the arousal of feelings. Also, as the *anukṛti* is not of an isolated atomic action, but of actions or rather interactions amongst human beings, it is the sequence of interactions where each is integrally related to the other, that is, the *itivṛtta* that forms the centre of attention. Many of the other concepts cluster around these, and form what may be called subsidiary clusters of their own.

But what role has *Rasa* to play in this conceptual structure relating to the realm of *Nāṭya*? Before we try to answer the question, let us see the conceptual structure of *Rasa* itself as elaborated in the paper of Prof. K.J. Shah. Shah uses the following concepts in his article entitled *The Theory of Rasa: its Conceptual Structure*:

1. Rasa
2. Vibhāva
3. Anubhāva
4. Sthāyī bhāva
5. Vyabhicārī bhāva
6. Sattvaja bhāva
7. Bhāva
8. Karuṇa rasa
9. Śānta rasa
10. Vipralaṁbha Śṛṇgāra
11. Bībhatsa rasa
12. Lokasvabhāva-saṁsiddha
13. Lokasvabhāvānugāminaḥ,
14. Lokaprasiddha,
15. Lokayātrānugāminaḥ,
16. Nirveda,
17. Artha
18. Kāma
19. Dharma,
20. Puruṣārtha,
21. Utsāha.

Shah seems to suggest some close relation between *Bhāva* and *Rasa*. But both, *Bhāva* and *Rasa*, seem to be in the plural. There is no such thing as *Rasa*, but either this or that *Rasa*. On the other

hand *Bhāvas* seem to be described either as causes or effects, or in terms of their duration or lastingness. But *Rasa* itself is supposed to be born of all these *Bhāvas*. Is it, then, a second order *Bhāva*, a *Bhāva* produced from other *Bhāvas*? Also, are we talking of *Bhāvas*, along with their numerous sub-divisions, of *Sarvakarmānudarśana* in the form of *anukṛti* presented through *paṭhya*, *gīta* and *abhinaya*. The *Sarvakarmānudarśana* has, of course, to be in the form of an *itivṛtta* with its *avasthās* with their *bīja*, *bindu*, *patākā*, *prakarī*, etc. But would, then, the concept of *Rasa* not be applicable to *itivṛtta* itself, but only to its *anukṛti* and that too only when it has all the ingredients of *paṭhya* and *abhinaya*, or only *abhinaya*, but no *paṭhya* or *gīta*? And, what has all this to do with *Lokasvabhāva* focus. Almost all the papers talk of the distinction between *Lokadharmin* and *Naṭyadharmin*, but are they two forms of *Nāṭya* or only *Nāṭyadharmin* can be called *Nāṭya*. In case the former represents the correct situation, then the term *Nāṭyadharmin* is systematically misleading as it tends to suggest that it alone is *Nāṭya* proper. On the other hand, if *Lokadharmin* is not *Nāṭya*, what is it and why is it being talked about at all. There are all the concepts related to *loka*, such as *Lokasvabhāva*, *Lokaprasiddha*, *Lokayātrā*, but then are these related only to *Lokadharmin* or to *Lokadharmin* preminently and to *Nāṭyadharmin* only in a subsidiary manner. Whatever may one's answer be to these questions, there is the deeper and the more disturbing question of the relation of *Lokadharmin* to *Rasa*. Can we talk of *Rasa* only in relation to that which is *Nāṭyadharmin*, and never in relation to that which is *Lokadharmin*?

Shah also brings in the key concept of *Puruṣārtha* into the picture but, strangely, he talks only of *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Dharma*, forgetting *Mokṣa* which presumably is the most important of them all. Does he imply that *Nāṭya* caters only to the three *puruṣārthas*, and not to the fourth. But, then, he himself has argued elsewhere that each of the four *puruṣārthas* is complementary to, and is complemented by, the others. The more important point, however, is that *Rasa* itself is not a *puruṣārtha* and yet it is supposedly the central point of *Nāṭya*, and the only thing received by the spectators. The *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Dharma*, if achieved at all, are achieved only by the performers. Also, no one can seriously argue that for the achievement of the so-called *puru-*

*ṣārthas*, one has necessarily to watch a *Nāṭya* or participate in it. This would hold true even if only the three *puruṣārthas* are accepted as belonging to the original scheme, as is alleged by many.

Prof. Kantak introduces a comparative dimension into the consideration of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*. Besides the usual list of concepts which others have also used, he introduces the new notion of *anukīrtana—bhāvānukīrtana* and *avasthānukīrtana*. Now *anukīrtana* is different from *anukṛti* or *anukaraṇa*. It is more of a resonating echo which captures through an analogue the essential meaning or significance of the original than imitation. Also, as the *anukīrtana* is both of *Avasthā* and *Bhāva*, or rather of *Bhāva* through the *Avasthā* or *Avasthās*, one has to conceive of an essential meaning or significance which is both cognitive and emotive at the same time. He has also tried to emphasise that the *Avasthās* of which we are to have *anukīrtana* in *Nāṭya*, are to be not only of this *loka*, but of all the three *lokas*, that is, the *trailokya*. But how can the *Lokasvabhāva* or the *Lokayātrā* be of all the three *lokas*, and even if it can be, how can we possibly know about the *lokas*, to which we do not belong or, at least, which we do not normally experience.

Prof. Kantak has tried to pinpoint the distinction between *Lokadharmin* and *Nāṭyadharmin* in terms of *Svabhāva* and *Vibhāva* where the two are supposed to be the same as 'natural' and 'artificial'. Another distinction is based on the fact that the former does not have *aṅga-līlā* in it, while the latter has it. *Mūrtimat* and *Sābhilāṣa* are the two other concepts in terms of which the distinction is sought to be drawn. But it is clear that none of these distinctions makes sense as it is difficult to imagine, how *aṅgālīlā* can be absent in *Lokadharmin*, or why *Lokadharmin* will not have the 'shape of a concrete corporeal image', as Kantak in his translation seems to suggest. As for *Sābhilāṣa*, it is not clear what it exactly means. Kantak's attempt at elucidation does not seem very helpful. And all this becomes still more intriguing when Kantak concludes by quoting a verse which says '*lokasiddhaṁ bhavet siddhaṁ, nāṭyaṁ lokātmakaṁ tathā*.' If this *is* the situation how can *Nāṭya* be anything but *Lokadharmin*?

Krishnamoorthy's paper brings in the notion of *Dhvani* introduced by Ānandavardhana into the discussion. This highlights what may be called 'conceptual development' in the con-

ceptual structure belonging to a particular domain. But the first question that arises, or should arise, in such a context relates to the cognitive need which led to the creation or elaboration of the new concept to meet the situation. Krishnamoorthy deals with the supposed inadequacies of the *Alaṁkāra* theory in respect of *Kāvya*, but says little about the inadequacy of the theories in respect of *Nāṭya* to warrant the introduction of an entirely new concept into the picture. It is, of course, true, as Dr Lath has suggested so graphically in his diagram that the two streams of thinking about aesthetic issues in India—the one about the *Nāṭya* and the other about the *Kāvya*—merge together after Ānandavardhana. But that does not explain why a new concept was needed to understand the concept of *Rasa* in the context of *Nāṭya*. Perhaps, the closest analogue to the concept of *Dhvani* amongst the concepts used in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is that of *anukīrtana*. In any case, the idea of *Dhvani* adds a new dimension to the conceptual repertoire of Indian Aesthetics.

Another interesting concept introduced by Krishnamoorthy is that of *Rasābhāsa*. The term *rasābhāsa* is traditionally used not in an aesthetic context, but rather to describe the moral inappropriateness of the situation which is evoking *rasa*. But, as Krishnamoorthy rightly remarks 'it is equally aesthetic to the *rasika* at the time of enjoying the poem.' But, if it is so, how can it become different later, as he also contends in his article. Further, *parakīyā prema* is accepted as the standard one in Sanskrit literature, and hence there should be nothing wrong in Rāvaṇa's love for Sītā, according to traditional canons. Perhaps, the difference lies in the fact that Sītā does not love Rāvaṇa. In any case, if moral considerations are to be brought into the picture, then the whole *Kṛṣṇa Bhakti-Kāvya* would have to be taken as an example of *Rasābhāsa par excellence*. The concept, therefore, has to be restricted to the aesthetic domain proper to which it naturally belongs. It would then mean the inappropriateness of the response of *Rasa* to the object which, if properly apprehended, would not have aroused it.

Prof. Patankar's paper on Madhusūdana Sarasvatī's *Bhakti-rasāyana* brings down the discussion almost to recent times and shows the pervasive influence of the concept of *Rasa* to such an extent that the *Bhakti* tradition felt the necessity of elevating

*Bhakti* to the status of a *Rasa*, perhaps the only *Rasa*. The new concepts introduced by Patankar into the discussion include besides *Bhakti-rasa*, *dravatva*, *dhārāvāhikatva*, *Sarveśaviṣayatva*, *neti neti*, *prātibhāsika sattā*, *prātibhāsika-sama sattā*, *vyāvahārika sattā*, *Sādhāraṇīkarāṇa*, etc. In the concept of *dravatva*, *dhārāvāhikatva*, *neti neti* the experience of *Rasa* is sought to be characterised for the first time. Through the concept of *prātibhāsika-sama sattā* the ontological status of an object which is an *avasthānukīrtana* or *bhāvānukīrtana* is sought to be described. Interestingly, a new category is added to the usual tripartite division of *Sattā* into *prātibhāsika*, *vyāvahārika* and *pārmarthika*,* necessiated by a reflection on the type of reality that *Nāṭya is*. However, the fact that it is still called *prātibhāsika-sama* shows that the hangover from the tripartite division remains. The *Nāṭya* makes a *vyāvahārika* use of *prātibhāsika sattās* to create both an *avasthānukīrtana* and a *bhāvānukīrtana* and thus destroys the distinction between *vyāvhārika* and *prātibhāsika* at its roots.

The acceptance of *Bhakti* as a *rasa* should lead either to a change in the definition of *Rasa* as a product of *Bhāva*, *Vibhāva*, etc. or one has to accept *Līlā* as essential to God, as without it the concept of *Rasa* cannot be relevantly brought into the picture. Those who refer to the Upaniṣadic statement '*Raso vai Saḥ*', and relate the notion of *rasa* as elaborated by Bharata in the context of *Nāṭya* to it seem to forget this. The theory of *Rasa* would have to destroy itself if it embraces the *Rasa* of the *Upaniṣads*.

Another interesting concept introduced by Patankar is that of *Sādhāraṇīkaraṇa*, which is well known in the context of discussions about *Rasa*. But it is not clear how this *Sādhārṇīkaraṇa* is different from the one which is found in all thought. Thinking, as everybody knows, would be impossible without abstraction and universalization. Art, on the other hand, is supposed to be the activity of concretizing *par excellence*. How, then, can *Sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* belong to it in any essential manner? Also, in the context

*We are not including *tuccha* amongst the types of *Sattā* as it refers to the self-contradictory or, in other words, that which is absolutely non-existent. It may be noted in this connection that not only the *Nyāya* classification of *Sattā* is different from that of the *Vedānta*, but also that the latter in its characterisation of both *Māyā* and *Brahman* uses discrepant predicates.

of the *Bhakti-rasa*, how can there be *Sādhāraṇīkaraṇa* of the object of *Bhakti*—a point raised by Patankar himself.

II

The six articles comprehend the conceptual structure of Indian thought about *Nāṭya* in diverse ways. There is a lot of overlapping in them, as it was bound to be because they deal with the same subject matter. Still, there are significant differences also. The deeper problem, however, is with the concepts and their interrelationships, and how we deal with them. The latter is as important as the former, for ultimately the problem is how we may use these concepts to understand and articulate our experience of *Nāṭya*. There is, of course, the important question as to what these concepts meant to Bharata and his successors. But basically that is a secondary question, primary only to antiquarians and historians of ideas. Even in the past, these concepts were continuously modified by the uses to which diverse thinkers put them to express their ideas. And that is how it is bound to be with all thought that is living. It *uses* the past to illumine the present and create the future. On the other hand when traditions become dead, they are mummified and put into museums and *studied* by those who have no living interest in them.

Many of the questions we have raised as well as the others which the authors have raised in their articles may have adequate answers in the tradition. But to ask them is to see the tradition in a new way, to subject it to a scrutiny that would reveal a new facet of it if it is there, or a lack of it, if it is not. The activity of questioning is the heart of the thinking process, and to ask a new question is to open a new vista for thought. The six articles are a valiant attempt in that direction and may, hopefully, inspire others to join the enterprise.

# APPENDIX

ATTEMPT AT A CHRONOLOGICAL CHART OF THE DIFFERENT STRANDS OF CRITICISM IN INDIA Sixth Century B.C. to Eighteenth Century A.D.

THEORISATION ON *NĀṬYA*
(*Rasa* theory)

PRE-BHARATA

—Śilālin : *Nāṭasūtra*, 6th cent. B.C.
—Taṇḍu (on *nṛtya*)
—Nārada (on dhruvā)
—Svāti and Puṣkara (on *ātodya*)
—Druhiṇa (on *rasa*)

* BHARATA: *Nāṭyaśāstra*, 1st cent. A.D.

COMMENTATORS ON BHARATA
(*rasa* theorists)

—Mātṛgupta, 6th-7th cent. A.D.
—Bhaṭṭa Lollaṭa, 7th cent. A.D.
—Śaṅkuka, 7th-8th cent. A.D.
—Bhaṭṭa Nāyaka, 8th cent. A.D.

DIGESTS OF THE *NĀṬYAŚĀSTRA*

* Dhanañjaya: *Daśarūpaka*, 10th cent. A.D.
* Dhanika: *Avaloka* (comm. on above) 11th cent. A.D.
* Sāgaranandin: *Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakoṣa*, 11th cent. A.D.
* Rāmacandra and Guṇacandra: *Nāṭyadarpaṇa*, 12th cent. A.D.
* Siṁhabhūpāla: *Nāṭakaparibaāṣā*, 14th cent. A.D.

INDEPENDENTS

—Nandikeśvara, 2nd-3rd cent. A.D. (Wrote on total theatre like Bharata, but with greater stress on *prayoga*, extending the scope of *nāṭya* to opera and ballet-like forms)
* Śāradātanaya: *Bhāvaprakāśana* (13th cent. A.D. More concerned with *prayoga*. Stress on opera and ballet-like forms).

* Work available
—Work not extant

THEORISATION ON *KĀVYA*
(*Alaṁkāra* theory)

With Ānandavardhana the *nāṭya* strand merges with the *alaṁkāra* strand within the concepts of dhvani and *rasa*.

* The Dhvanikāra: *Dhvanikārikā* (8th cent. A.D.)
* ĀNANDAVARDHANA: *Dhvanyāloka* (an exposition of the *Dhvanikārikā*, 9th cent. A.D.)

—Bhaṭṭa Tauta (Abhinava's teacher)

* ABHINAVAGUPTA: 1. *Abhinavabhāratī*, comm, on *N. S.* 2. *Locana*, comm. on *Dhvanyāloka*. (10th-11th cent. A.D.)

*RASA-DHVANI-ALAMKĀRA*

(Theorists who took account of *rasa-dhvani* but showed a definite leaning towards the old *alaṁkāra* school)

* Rājaśekhara: *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*, 10th cent. A.D.
* Kuntaka: *Vakroktijīvita*, 11th cent. A.D.
* Mammaṭa: *Kāvyaprakāśa*, 11th cent. A.D.
* Hemacandra: *Kāvyamīmāṁsā*, 12th cent. A.D.
* Jayadeva: *Candrāloka* 13th cent. A.D.
* Vāgbhaṭṭa: *Vāgbhaṭṭālaṁkāra*, 13th cent. A.D.
* Vidyānātha: *Pratāparudrayaśobhūaṇa*, 13th-14th cent. A.D.
* Viśvanātha: *Sāhityadarpaṇa*, 14th cent. A.D.
* Appaya Dīkṣita: *Kuvalayānanda* and *Citramīmāṁsā*
* Jagannatha: *Rasagaṅgādhara*, 17th 18th cent. A.D.

INDEPENDENTS

* Bhoja: *Śṛṅgāraprakāśa*, 11th cent. A.D. (knows *dhvani* yet not influenced by Ānandavardhana)
* Mahimabhaṭṭa: *Vyaktiviveka*, 11th cent. A.D. (accepts *rasa*, opposes *dhvani*)
* Rudrabhaṭṭa: *Śṛṅgāratilaka*, 11th cent. A.D. (*rasa* but not *dhvani*)

*GUṆA/RĪTI*
'STYLE' theorists

* DAṆḌIN: *Kāvyādarśa*, 7th cent. A.D.
* Vāmana: *Kāvyālaṁkārasūtravṛtti*, 8th cent. A.D.

*VAKROKTI*
RHETORIC theorists

* Bhāmaha: *Kāvyālaṁkāra*, 6th-7th cent. A.D.
* Udbhaṭa: *Kāvyālaṁkārasārasaṁgraha*, 8th cent. A.D.
* Rudraṭa: *Kāvyālaṁkāra*, 9th cent. A.D. (combines the two trends)

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